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A

DISSERTATION

ON THE

CONVERSION AND RESTORATION

OF THE

JEWS:

WHEREIN IT IS SHEWN, THAT THE TIME WHEN THESE IMPORTANT EVENTS ARE DESTINED TO HAPPEN, IS, IN ALL PROBABILITY, VERY NEAR.

ISAIAH xliii. 21.

"This people have I formed for myself, they shall shew forth my praise."

BY JAMES LUNN,

PREACHER OF THE GOSPEL.

EDINBURGH:

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THE

PREFACE.

THE events that have lately taken place in Europe, and thoſe which are likely to reſult from the war in which we are at preſent engaged, are ſo great, important, and intereſting, that one cannot help being anxious to know whether God is leading us in the courſe of his Providence, and ſaying as the prophet did to the angel, Dan. xii. 6. "How "long ſhall it be to the end of theſe wonders?" or, as it is in Iſa. xxi. 11. "Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what "of the night?" or, How much of this long night of trouble is paſt, and how much is there yet to come? or, When will it be morning? To ſolve this important queſtion, to ſhew, if poſſible, what part of the prophecies correſponds with the preſent times; which

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of the vials we are at preſent under, and from thence to form a rational conjecture concerning the time when the great events mentioned in the prophecies are deſtined to happen, was, in part, my deſign in writing the following diſcourſe; in which, though I have not had all the ſucceſs I could wiſh, yet I have ſucceeded ſo far. I have made it exceeding probable, that the principal ſtep of Antichriſt's fall will be either in the year 12 or 28 of the preſent century; and that his final overthrow will be at leaſt an hundred years ſooner than the time that Lowman and Biſhop Newton have ſet for it. I could have ſaid a great deal more in proof of this point, and have actually done it in a ſeparate treatiſe, On the Riſe and Fall of the Papacy, which I intended to have publiſhed along with this, On the Converſion of the Jews; but am unable, through want of health and bodily infirmity, to bear the fatigue of doing it at preſent.

A

DISSERTATION

ON THE

CONVERSION AND RESTORATION

OF

THE JEWS.

A DISCOURSE ON ROMANS xi. 11.

I Say then, Have they ſtumbled that they ſhould fall? God forbid: but through their fall ſalvation is come to the Gentiles, to provoke them to jealouſy.

THE deſign of the Apoſtle in this and the two preceding chapters, is to vindicate the juſtice, wiſdom, and goodneſs of the Almighty, in one of the moſt remarkable diſpenſations of his providence that has ever happened ſince the beginning of time; I mean, the calling of the Gentiles, and the rejection of the Jews. And, in proſecution of this deſign, he firſt ſhows us, that the divine conduct, in this diſpenſation, was perfectly agreeable to the natural notions that men have of equity and juſtice: That the bleſſings of the goſpel, like all the other benefits which God has beſtowed upon men, are the

effects of his own free bounty and goodneſs; and as none of his creatures could be ſuppoſed to have any claim upon him, ſo it was wholly in his option, whether to beſtow theſe bleſſings at all on mankind or not, and to confer them upon whom, and in whatſoever meaſure, he pleaſed. He might have mercy on whom he would have mercy; and there could be no injuſtice in denying that to ſome, which he was not obliged to beſtow upon any: That as the potter hath power over the clay, of the ſame lump, to make one veſſel to honour, and another to diſhonour; ſo was the great Creator of the world at liberty, not only to make his creatures of different ranks and orders, and to endue them with different talents and capacities, but even, of the ſame race and order of beings, to raiſe ſome to higher degrees of perfection and happineſs than others, and to place them in circumſtances more or leſs advantageous, as to his infinite wiſdom ſhould ſeem moſt proper, for anſwering the wiſe ends of his providence. He reaſons alſo from analogy, which is the ſureſt guide to man in all his inquiries into the nature of God's moral government; and ſhows us, that the conduct of Providence, in chooſing the Gentiles to be his church and people in the room of the Jews, is exactly conformable to the diſpenſations of his grace in former ages. He inſtances in the caſe of Iſaac, who was the only perſon, of all the numerous poſterity of Abraham, that God choſe to be the father of his church, and heir of the promiſes: As likewiſe in that of Jacob, who was preferred to the ſame honour, in the room of his elder brother Eſau, who was the natural heir: and betwixt whoſe rejection, and that

of

of the Jews, there was, on this account, the greater reſemblance; "For unto them," as the Apoſtle obſerves, "pertained the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law," &c. But the ſame ſenſual and worldly diſpoſition which coſt Eſau his birth-right, proved alſo the cauſe of their rejection; for being more concerned for their temporal welfare than for their eternal happineſs, and more ambitious of the riches and honours of this preſent life than of the joys of a better, they deſpiſed their Meſſiah, becauſe his coming did not anſwer their carnal and groundleſs expectations. He likewiſe vindicates the juſtice of Providence in rejecting the Jews, from the nature of thoſe ſins which brought this judgment upon them; *viz.* their unbelief and diſobedience to the call of the goſpel: and certainly it was but reaſonable, that they who would not embrace the goſpel, when in their offer, ſhould be deprived of its benefits and privileges; that they ſhould be rejected from being the people of God, who had rejected the meſſage of his only Son, reſiſted the teſtimony of the holy Spirit, and hardened themſelves againſt the moſt powerful means of conviction. And having vindicated the juſtice of this diſpenſation, the Apoſtle proceeds, in the verſe we have now read, and thoſe which follow, to illuſtrate the wiſdom and goodneſs thereof. He ſhows us, that the Almighty, in rejecting the Jews, had not acted arbitrarily or without reaſon, much leſs from any pleaſure he had in their ſufferings, nor yet merely from a regard to his authority, or as a puniſhment upon them for their unbelief and diſobedience to the call of the goſpel, though it was ſuch as mighty ſufficiently juſtify the

divine

divine conduct towards them; but chiefly from a view to the good of the reſt of mankind, as this gave occaſion to the preaching of the goſpel among the Gentiles, and contributed both to the propagation of the Chriſtian religion at firſt in the world, and was alſo a means of preſerving and maintaining it in after ages. "I ſay then, Have they ſtumbled that they "ſhould fall? God forbid: but through their fall "ſalvation is come to the Gentiles."

In diſcourſing farther from theſe words, I propoſe, through divine aſſiſtance, firſt, To explain the words; and, then, To deduce from them a few obſervations, one or more of which I ſhall proſecute as your time will allow.

Firſt, I am to explain the words. The deſign of this verſe, as it ſtands connected with the preceding context, is to prevent a miſtake concerning the doctrine there inculcated. The Apoſtle had aſſerted, that God intended to caſt off the Jews from being his people, and to exclude them from the church of Chriſt; and, in proof of this, had cited two paſſages from the Old Teſtament, where the blindneſs and infidelity of that people are foretold. But that none might miſtake his meaning, as if that blindneſs was to be perpetual, or to laſt for ever, he adds, "I ſay "then, Have they ſtumbled that they ſhould fall:" as if he had ſaid, I have ſhown it is the will of God, that the Jews, for their abuſe of his mercies, their unbelief and diſobedience to the call of the goſpel, ſhould be rejected from being his people, and deprived of all the advantages they enjoyed from ſo honourable a relation; that they ſhould be excluded from the church of Chriſt, and given up to a ſpirit of blindneſs

and

and infidelity; and have endeavoured to vindicate the divine juſtice, in inflicting this dreadful judgment upon them: but would not be ſo underſtood, as if God intended to leave them in this deplorable ſtate, nor ever more to receive them into his favour. I am perſuaded of the contrary, not only from the predictions of the former prophets, who have foretold a glorious reſtoration to the people of God in the latter days, but alſo from the teſtimony of the holy Spirit, who has been graciouſly pleaſed to grant me a particular revelation of this, for my own and the church's comfort: *viz.* That there is a time coming, when the Lord ſhall bring back the captivity of Iſrael, and again acknowledge them for his people; when the vail ſhall be removed from their hearts, in the reading of the ſcriptures, and their eyes opened, to ſee the accompliſhment of them in the perſon of our Saviour. It is not therefore the deſign of Providence to caſt off the Jews for ever, but only to exclude them from the church for a time, in order to make way for the converſion of the Gentiles; neither is it to be conſidered ſo much as a token of his averſion to the former, as of his love and mercy to the latter. As the wiſe Governor of the world never acts arbitrarily, or without reaſon, in any of his dealings with his creatures, but leaſt of all in the diſtribution of puniſhment; ſo his ſeverity to the Jews is intended for good to the reſt of mankind, and hath, in fact, been productive of the greateſt bleſſings to the world in general, as it has been a means of ſpreading the goſpel among the Gentiles, of enlightening the underſtanding, and reforming the lives of many thouſands of mankind formerly ſunk in ſuperſtition and vice, of purifying their

their hearts by faith, and bringing them, through the knowledge of the truth, to a ſtate of eternal happineſs in a better world; which happy effects of the goſpel are intended, in the wiſdom of God, to be a means of bringing the Jews to repentance, and the acknowledgment of the truth as it is in Chriſt, by exciting in them a holy emulation to ſee the Gentiles ſubſtituted in their ſtead, and poſſeſſed of all thoſe diſtinguiſhing bleſſings and privileges which they, as the people of God, formerly enjoyed.

From the words thus explained, theſe obſervations do naturally occur: Firſt, That the fall of the Jews was the riſe of the Gentiles; or, That the rejecting of the goſpel by the former, was a means of propagating the Chriſtian religion at firſt in the world, and alſo of preſerving and maintaining it in after ages. Secondly, That this apoſtaſy of the Jews is not final, or to continue for ever; but, at a time appointed by infinite wiſdom, to end in their converſion to the Chriſtian faith, and reſtoration to their former privileges.

Firſt, I ſay, The fall of the Jews was the riſe of the Gentiles: To this end it contributed ſeveral ways; 1ſt, As it was that chiefly which gave occaſion to the preaching of the goſpel among the Gentiles.

The Apoſtles, having been educated in all the falſe principles and tenets of the corrupt Jewiſh church, had, at firſt, this notion in common with the reſt of their countrymen, that the bleſſings of the Meſſiah's kingdom belonged only to them, and that the Gentiles were ſtill to be excluded from the church of God. They thought, that the promiſes made to the Patriarchs extended only to their poſterity, or natural offspring; and as ſalvation was of the Jews, ſo they alone

alone were to pertake of it. The Jews had received ſo many tokens of the divine favour, had met with ſo many temporal deliverances, and ſo long enjoyed the ineſtimable bleſſing of being the peculiar church and people of God, that they began to preſume on the divine goodneſs, and to think themſelves poſſeſſed of his favour by a kind of hereditary and indefeaſible right. The Gentiles, on the other hand, had been ſo long in a ſtate of diſtance and alienation from God, ſo long excluded from his church, and under the power of darkneſs and ſuperſtition, that the Jews began to deſpair of their recovery, and to think that God, in puniſhment of their idolatry and wilful deſertion of the truth, had given them over to a final blindneſs and impenitence; which miſtake, for ſome time, poſſeſſed the minds of the Apoſtles, as well as the reſt of their countrymen. Though there are many paſſages that expreſsly fortel the calling of the Gentiles, and that all kingdoms of the earth were to be bleſſed in the Meſſiah, and Chriſt himſelf had let fall ſeveral hints concerning his deſign of bringing the Gentiles into his church, and admitting them to the privileges of the goſpel, yet ſuch was the force of their prejudices, that, at firſt, they neither underſtood the one or the other, but continued, for ſeveral years, to preach the goſpel to the Jews only. Accordingly we find, that when a door of mercy was to be opened to the Gentiles by the miniſtry of Peter, the Spirit of God thought it neceſſary to remove his prejudices, and prepare him for that office, by a viſion from heaven: That his brethren, when they underſtood that he had diſpenſed goſpel-privileges to thoſe of another nation, queſtioned him ſomewhat

ſharply

ſharply for it: and on declaring to them his commiſſion and authority for what he had done, they expreſs themſelves with a kind of ſurpriſe, that plainly diſcovers their former ignorance of God's merciful deſigns towards the Gentiles; "Then hath God alſo "to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life:" Acts xi. 18. Partly from theſe prejudices, and partly from the love they bore to their native country, a paſſion which is always ſtrongeſt in virtuous minds, they continued for ſeveral years preaching the goſpel, chiefly with a view to the converſion of their own nation: But after many unſucceſsful attempts, finding the greater part of them hardened in unbelief, and deaf to the voice both of ſcripture and reaſon, and that inſtead of obeying the call, and welcoming the glad tidings of the goſpel, they blaſphemed its bleſſed Author, and reviled and perſecuted his miniſters; this opened their eyes, and leſſened that extravagant opinion they had of their own nation, and as the Jews ſunk in the one ſcale, the Gentiles roſe in the other. This effectually removed their prejudices, and rendered them more zealous and active in carrying on the great work of publiſhing among the Gentiles the principles and doctrines of Chriſt. That this was the effect which the unbelief of the Jews had upon the Apoſtles, we learn from the hiſtory of their Acts; where we are told, that, upon an occaſion of the Apoſtles preaching the goſpel at Antioch, when the Jews, who were in that city, oppoſed his doctrine, contradicted and blaſphemed, as it is ſaid, then he and Barnabas waxed bold, and ſaid, "It was neceſ-"ſary that the word of God ſhould firſt have been "ſpoken to you: but ſeeing you put it from you,

"and

" and judge yourſelves unworthy of everlaſting life, " lo, we turn to the Gentiles:" Acts xiii. 46.

2dly, The unbelief of the Jews contributed to the converſion of the Gentiles, as it afforded them one of the ſtrongeſt proofs of the truth of the goſpel: I mean, a teſtimony in its favour from thoſe that were its bittereſt enemies; for though the Jews denied the truth of the goſpel, yet they acknowledged the greater part of the facts on which the proof of it is founded. They not only acknowledged, that there was ſuch a perſon as Jeſus Chriſt, who was the Author of the Chriſtian religion—that he lived in Judea, and at ſuch a time, and was put to death by the command of the Roman governor, but likewiſe many other facts, that tend more directly to prove the truth of the goſpel. For example, they acknowledged, that he was a worker of miracles; or that, in proof of his divine miſſion, he performed many wonderful works, ſuch as, to the nature of them, or the manner in which they were wrought, exceeded all the art of man, or the power of natural cauſes. This, both the Jews and other enemies of Chriſtianity, in ancient times, acknowledged; and in order to evade the force of it, fooliſhly endeavoured to account for it by the power of magic, or ſome other hypotheſis ſtill more ridiculous and abſurd.

They acknowledged, that he was born of mean parents, or thoſe whoſe worldly circumſtances were poor and low; and, conſequently, ſuch as could not enable them to give him a liberal education. This was a matter of ſome importance to the Chriſtian cauſe; for from hence it was evident, as it ſtill is, that neither the miracles he wrought, nor the ſublime

diſcourſes with which he entertained the people, could be the effect of great learning, or a ſuperior knowledge of the myſteries and powers of nature. Another fact, acknowledged by the Jews of old, and which contributed greatly to the converſion of the Gentiles, is, that our Saviour never made any attempt upon the government, or diſcovered any ſigns of ſuch a deſign. He never put on any of the enſigns of royalty, or affected the ſtyle and title of a king. He never employed his authority with the people, to excite them to rebellion, or exhorted them to take up arms, in order to force his way to the throne, though he wanted not motives to tempt him to ſuch an enterpriſe, as he was deſcended from a race of anceſtors that had for many ages ſwayed the ſceptre over the Jewiſh nation; had a numerous party among the people, that, upon the leaſt intimation of ſuch a deſign, would have been ready to aſſert his pretenſions; and the nation in general was, at that time, weary of the Roman yoke, and ripe for a revolt: yet, in ſpite of all theſe advantages, and ſo great a proſpect of ſucceſs, he never made any attempt to ſeize the government, or diſcovered the ſmalleſt ſigns of a worldly ambition. This they acknowledged; and for this they rejected him. But what procured him the ſcorn and contempt of the Jews, has, in all ages, raiſed his eſteem among the Gentiles, and contributed very much to the confirmation of their faith; for hereby it is evident, that it was neither the love of riches, nor power, nor any temporal motive whatever, that induced him to act the part that he did. It muſt indeed be owned, that the hiſtory of our Saviour's trial ſeems to contradict what we have now

aſſerted.

aſſerted. We there find him accuſed by the Jews, of perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Ceſar, and making himſelf a king: But this they did, not becauſe they had any evidence of his ever having acted in this manner; but they drew it as a conſequence, from a very different part which our Saviour is indeed acknowledged to have acted: he owned, that he was the Meſſiah, the Saviour foretold by the Prophets: but the Meſſiah, according to their notions of him, was to be a temporal prince and deliverer; and therefore they concluded, that whoever pretended to the one character, muſt neceſſarily be ſuppoſed to have laid claim to the other. Beſides, as the falſehood of this charge immediately appeared upon the examination of the witneſſes, there is reaſon to believe, that the Jews afterwards gave it up: which leads me to another fact, acknowledged by the Jews of old, and which muſt have contributed greatly to the converſion of the Gentiles; and that is, our Saviour's public acquittal at the bar of Pilate. They could not deny, that his conduct was there freely expoſed to the examination of thoſe who wanted neither capacity nor inclination to do it; and yet all their malice could not faſten one blot upon his character, or prove him guilty of the ſmalleſt offence, either againſt the laws of God or man. This the governor declared oftener than once, in the hearing of the multitude; and though, to ingratiate himſelf with them, as he was already obnoxious to them on ſeveral accounts, and for fear leſt they ſhould accuſe him to Ceſar, he at laſt conſented to our Saviour's crucifixion, yet it was with all the ſigns of reluctance, and not till he had tried

every

every poſſible method to appeaſe their rage. As this was a tranſaction of a very public nature, carried on in broad day-light, and before a vaſt multitude of ſpectators of different nations, the Jews, notwithſtanding their prejudices, cannot be ſuppoſed to have denied it.

But the moſt important of all the facts, which the Jews of old acknowledged concerning our Saviour, and which contributed moſt to the converſion of the Gentiles, are thoſe relating to his death and reſurrection; ſuch as, the ſupernatural darkneſs that happened at the time of his paſſion; the earthquake that followed it; the rending of the rocks, and the vail of the temple. Theſe were all facts of a public nature, and the ſubject of every body's obſervation; and therefore we cannot imagine, that the Jews would have the confidence to deny them. They did not indeed acknowledge our Saviour's reſurrection, but they acknowledged what was equivalent to it; *viz.* that he forewarned them of it, and alſo fixed the day when it was to happen, and ſo gave them an opportunity of convincing themſelves of the truth, or detecting the falſehood of his prediction. They acknowledged, that, in conſequence of this warning, they had placed a ſtrong guard over his ſepulchre, in order to watch the event, and prevent his body from being ſtolen; and to ſecure it againſt all private attempts, ſet a ſeal on the ſtone that was rolled to the door of the ſepulchre: but that notwithſtanding all their care, ere the time appointed by him for his reſurrection was expired, his body was amiſſing, and the ſepulchre empty. This they could not deny; and in order to evade the force of it, pretended, that while the guards ſlept, his diſciples had come and

ſtolen

ſtolen him away: a pretence that carries its own confutation along with it; for if they were aſleep, how could they know he was ſtolen? or who it was that had ſtolen him? and how improbable is it, that ſuch a number of men ſhould all fall aſleep at the ſame time, when not only their honour, but their lives, were at ſtake!

Such a ſleep as this, would have been as miraculous as our Lord's reſurrection. But let us ſuppoſe, for argument's ſake, that, through ſome unaccountable infatuation, theſe guards did ſo far neglect their duty; yet how improbable is it, that a handful of timid men, who had but two nights before deſerted their Maſter in his greateſt diſtreſs, ſhould all at once aſſume ſuch courage, as to venture on carrying off his body through a numerous band of armed men, who, for ought they knew, were all upon their guard, and ready to reſiſt them! or ſuppoſing they had courage for ſuch an enterpriſe, yet how improbable is it, that they ſhould manage their buſineſs with ſuch dexterity, as not to awaken ſome of the guards, eſpecially as they had the great ſtone which lay at the door of the ſepulchre to remove, which one would think could not have been ſo eaſily done!

Theſe are ſome of the facts on which the truth of our holy religion is founded, and which were acknowledged by the Jews of old: for though perhaps ſome, and even ſuch as had been eye-witneſſes of them, were wicked enough to deny them, yet conſidering the nature of theſe facts, it is not to be ſuppoſed, but that the greater part of the Jews, notwithſtanding their enmity to the Chriſtian name, were honeſt enough to confeſs them, and whoſe teſtimony,

teſtimony, without doubt, contributed greatly to the converſion of the Gentiles; nay, the greater part of the facts now mentioned, are even acknowledged by the Jews at this preſent time. And here I cannot but take notice of the futility of an objection, in which our adverſaries ſeem very much to triumph: The Jews, ſay they, were our Saviour's countrymen, and had the beſt acceſs to know the truth of the facts recorded in the goſpel: they lived upon the ſpot, and many of them are ſuppoſed to have been eye-witneſſes of his miracles; and therefore their diſbelief of the goſpel muſt be a ſtrong preſumption againſt it. This objection would indeed ſignify ſomething, if it were true. But the truth is, the Jews do not deny the facts on which the proof of the goſpel is founded; they only deny the inference that we, Chriſtians, have drawn from them; and whether their reaſoning, or ours, is juſt, we leave it to the world to judge: for we cannot but conclude, that if theſe facts are true, as moſt certainly they are, that then the goſpel muſt be a divine revelation.

3dly, The unbelief of the Jews did at firſt contribute to the converſion of the Gentiles, and ſtill contributes thereto, as it has furniſhed men, in all ages, with one of the ſtrongeſt proofs of the authenticity of the prophecies of the Old Teſtament. In theſe prophecies, we have a very full and particular account of the character, life, and death of our bleſſed Saviour; of the nature of his offices, and the ſucceſs of his goſpel: And therefore if it can be ſhewn, that theſe prophecies were in being before the times of the goſpel, and have been faithfully handed down to us without ſuffering any material alteration, we need

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no more to prove either the truth of divine revelation in general, or of the goſpel in particular: and of this, the unbelief of the Jews furniſhes us with the moſt demonſtrative proof; for it is impoſſible that ever the Chriſtians could have corrupted the prophecies, ſeeing the books, in which they are contained, were every where in the hands of their enemies, and it would have been the eaſieſt thing in the world to have convicted them of the forgery: Neither is it to be ſuppoſed, that the Jews would have done any violence to the ſacred text, in favours of a doctrine ſo contrary to their inclination: But leaſt of all was it poſſible, for both to agree in corrupting the ſcriptures, as the perſonal enmity of the one was ſo great, and the religious opinions of both, eſpecially their notions concerning the Meſſiah, ſo very different. The Saviour whom the Jews expected, was a mighty warlike prince, who was to free them from the Roman yoke, and to ſubdue the nations under them by force of arms. The Saviour in whom the Chriſtians believe, was a prince of a meek and quiet ſpirit; who came, not to deſtroy men's lives, but to ſave them; not to ſhed the blood of the innocent, but to pour out his own for the ſake of the guilty; not to deliver one particular nation only, but to ſave the human race, and that, not from a temporal bondage, but from eternal death; who ſhould conquer the nations, not by force of arms, but by the demonſtration of the Spirit, and of reaſon. This great difference betwixt the Jews and Chriſtians, concerning the character of the Meſſiah, renders it morally impoſſible, that one tittle of the deſcriptions which is given of it in the Old Teſtament, could have been corrupted by the agreement

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of both parties; and as I have ſhown you, it was impoſſible for either of them to do it ſeparately—it remains, that theſe ſcriptures muſt be authentic and genuine.

Thus, whilſt the Jews denied the doctrines of the goſpel, and at the ſame time acknowledged the divine authority of the Scriptures, as alſo the greater part of the facts on which the Chriſtian religion is founded, they have contributed more to the conviction of the Gentiles, than if they themſelves had embraced the faith, and joined with the Apoſtles in propagating the ſame. Beſides, had they done this, it might have been objected, that the whole hiſtory of the goſpel was a political contrivance of that ambitious and vainglorious people, to advance the honour of their nation, and facilitate their conqueſt over the Gentiles. We know, that, at the time of our Saviour's appearance, and for ſeveral years both before and after, the Jewiſh nation was big with the hopes of univerſal empire, to be obtained under the reign of the Meſſiah; the fame of which, having ſpread itſelf through the neighbouring nations and provinces of the Roman empire, had excited their jealouſy, and rendered them ſuſpicious of every ſtep taken by a people, whoſe hopes were ſo dangerous to the peace and liberty of others. Had the goſpel then made its appearance under the patronage and countenance of the Jewiſh nation, as they were then on ſuch bad terms with their neighbours, this would have greatly increaſed the prejudices of the Gentiles againſt it, and laid ſuch a ſtumbling-block in their way, as, it is to be feared, few would have been able to ſurmount. Again, had the body of the Jewiſh nation been converted

verted to the Chriſtian religion, and incorporated with the Gentiles in the church of Chriſt, it is more than probable they would have uſurped an authority therein, that might have been extremely prejudicial to the intereſts of religion, and the liberties of their Chriſtian brethren. They might have claimed a ſuperiority over the Gentiles, on account of their affinity to our Saviour's perſon, their being the children of Abraham, and heirs of the promiſes. They might have pleaded farther, in ſupport of their pretenſions, that the church of Judea was the primitive or mother church, the place where the goſpel took its riſe, which had given birth to our Saviour and his Apoſtles, had been the guardian of the ſacred oracles, the channel through which the true religion, and all its bleſſings, had been derived to the Gentiles. We know what an extenſive authority, not only in eccleſiaſtical, but alſo in civil matters, a neighbouring church has aſſumed, upon a much ſlighter foundation than all this; and there is little reaſon to think that the Jews, who were an ambitious people, would not have availed themſelves of theſe advantages, or that they would have been eaſily perſuaded to quit the hopes they had ſo long entertained of a temporal kingdom. Had the Jews then been admitted into the church of Chriſt, it is probable they would have uſurped the ſame authority therein that the Church of Rome has done; and the miſchief that would have attended this, is, that, as their pretenſions to it were better founded, it is likely this uſurpation would have taken place long before the date of the Popes ſupremacy, and perhaps or ever Chriſtianity had got footing in the world, which would have greatly hindered, if not wholly

prevented, its farther progreſs. We ſee, from the hiſtory of the Acts, with what difficulty the Jewiſh converts were reſtrained from lording it over the Gentiles, and impoſing their burdenſome ceremonies upon them: But how much more difficult would it have been to have reſtrained ſuch an abuſe, had the whole nation ſet up for it, and that at a time when there were none in the church inveſted with apoſtolical authority to reſtrain them? But now that the Jews have been ſo long in a ſtate of affliction and baniſhment, and again to be reſtored to the divine favour, and admitted to the privileges of the goſpel, as is probable, by the miniſtry of the Gentiles, all occaſion of boaſting, and lording it in the church of Chriſt, is prevented.

4thly, The rejection of the Jews has contributed to the ſalvation of the Gentiles, as it brought upon that people ſuch dreadful calamities as ſtruck a terror into the world, and has ſerved to convince men, in all ages, of the ſin and danger of unbelief. There is ſuch a ſtriking reſemblance betwixt the ſufferings of that miſerable people, and their ſin in crucifying the Saviour, that it is eaſy to ſee the one was the cauſe of the other. In the firſt place, it is evident, if we conſider the greatneſs of their ſufferings. So dreadful were they, that there is not, in the whole compaſs of hiſtory, an inſtance to be found that can equal them: For beſides the utter deſtruction of their city, and the many hardſhips they underwent in time of the ſiege, from the ſword, famine, and peſtilence, there were many thouſands of them afterwards ſlain in cold blood: of the reſt, ſome were condemned to work in the mines; ſome ſold for ſlaves into

into different countries; others expoſed to wild beaſts on the theatre; and ſuch as eſcaped the hand of their enemies, were driven into baniſhment, and diſperſed all over the world, where they continue to this day a miſerable and vagabond people, without any ſettled reſidence, without a king, without government, and without the free exerciſe of their religion. Now, the greatneſs of the puniſhment argues the heinouſneſs of the offence. And what greater offence could they have been guilty of, than of putting the Lord of life and glory to death, of condemning and crucifying the innocent and holy Jeſus, contrary to the conviction of their own conſciences, and without the leaſt ſhadow of evidence for the crimes laid to his charge? This was ſuch an offence, as no nation under heaven, nor any of the ſons of men, either before or ſince, ever committed, or had an opportunity of committing. Another circumſtance that points out the cauſe of the Jews ſufferings, is the univerſality or extent of them: For it was not the inhabitants of Judea only that were involved in the calamities of that time, but the whole nation of the Jews, wherever ſcattered throughout the world: for the enemy came upon them at the time of one of thoſe ſolemn feſtivals, when all their males were commanded by the law to preſent themſelves before the Lord; and we are told, there were ſuch multitudes of them aſſembled, from all quarters at Jeruſalem, on that occaſion, that the like concourſe had not been known for many years. Thus they, who formerly had led the Saviour of mankind as a lamb to the ſlaughter, were themſelves led, by the inviſible hand of a juſt Providence, to Jeruſalem, as to a place of ſlaughter, to become

become a prey to that very people into whoſe hands they had betrayed him. Another circumſtance that points out the cauſe of the Jews ſufferings, is, that they who had been acceſſary to the death of Chriſt, or, by rejecting the goſpel, had approved of that wicked deed, were the only ſufferers in that calamity; for the believing Jews, as we learn from the hiſtory of thoſe times, taking warning from the predictions of our Saviour, when they ſaw the approach of the Roman army, forſook the place, and took refuge beyond Jordan, in a city called Pella, where they ſ aid till the end of the ſiege, and the country was gain ſettled in peace under the Romans. There are everal other particulars relating to the ſufferings of the Jews, which point out the cauſe that occaſioned them, and which, for brevity's ſake, I ſhall but juſt mention: Such as, their ſuffering for rebellion againſt the Roman government, the very crime of which they had falſely accuſed our Saviour: their ſuffering the ſame kind of death to which they had unjuſtly procured his condemnation—I mean, crucifixion; for ſo great was the number that died in this manner, that, as Joſephus informs us, 'room was want-'ing for croſſes, and croſſes for perſons.' Laſtly, Their ſuffering from the hands of their own countrymen, or thoſe who ſhould have befriended them; I mean, the fierce and bloody zealots, mentioned by the ſame hiſtorian, who, under pretence of religion and the defence of their country, took an opportunity to commit all kinds of cruelty.

In a word, the reſemblance betwixt the Jews ſin and their puniſhment is ſo great, that we cannot conceive

conceive any circumſtance awanting that could have rendered it more complete.

Their ſin was national, and ſo was their puniſhment: their ſin was the greateſt that ever was committed by the ſons of men, and there is not, in all hiſtory, an inſtance to be found that can equal their ſufferings: their ſin was highly deſerving the divine cognizance, and their puniſhment had all the marks of divine vengeance. They were puniſhed by the ſame inſtruments, at the ſame ſeaſon of the year, and many of them by the ſame kind of death, that is, firſt ſcourged, and then crucified. And if to this we add, the long duration of their miſery, which continues to this very day, we muſt acknowledge, that there never was a more ſignal inſtance of divine vengeance.

To the above argument, taken from the reſemblance there was betwixt the ſin and puniſhment of the Jews, it may be objected, that crucifixion was a Roman death; and though the Romans ſeldom or never crucified the inhabitants of the cities they conquered, yet conſidering the obſtinacy of the Jews, it was no wonder that Titus uſed them in this manner. To this it may be anſwered, That their crucifixion was perhaps the effect, or conſequence, of their obſtinacy: but then no natural cauſe, or reaſon, can be aſſigned for their obſtinacy; neither did it flow ſo much from their wickedneſs, as from a certain unaccountable infatuation or judicial blindneſs. Wickedneſs, for the moſt part, does not imbolden men, or prompt them to hazardous enterpriſes, but rather weakens and enervates them: The wicked, ſaith Solomon, "flieth, when no man purſueth;

" ſueth; and is in great fear, where no fear is:" And therefore the conduct of the Jews, in undertaking the war, eſpecially in holding out ſo long againſt the Romans, cannot be aſcribed to their wickedneſs, but to an extraordinary infatuation, or a train of cauſes leading them to it, and which could not have been laid but by an omniſcient Being; for how came the Jews to be ſo obſtinate at that time? They were not ſo in the days of Pompey: neither did he crucify any of them, though he was a Roman as well as Titus. Beſides, the hand of God is to be ſeen in this, that the Jews did not take away our Saviour's life in ſome other way than by crucifixion, in which caſe the reſemblance betwixt the Jews ſin and their puniſhment muſt have failed; that they did not take away his life in a popular tumult, or by private aſſaſſination, as they intended to have done to Paul; or that they did not accept the offer which Pilate gave them, of judging him according to their own law; in all which caſes he muſt have ſuffered a different kind of death from that which he ſuffered, and the reſemblance betwixt the Jews ſin and their puniſhment muſt have failed in one of its principal circumſtances. Beſides, what ſhall we ſay as to the other circumſtances of their puniſhment; ſuch as, the time when the ſiege commenced, *viz.* when the paſſover was juſt at hand, the very time when they crucified our Saviour; their being puniſhed by the ſame inſtruments they had employed in crucifying him, *viz.* the Roman ſoldiers? To which we may add, the greatneſs, and long duration of their ſufferings; both of them circumſtances that ſerve to point out the cauſe of the divine diſpleaſure againſt that people, and

and ſerve to render the reſemblance betwixt their ſin and puniſhment complete.

I now proceed to the ſecond thing propoſed in the method; namely, To ſhow that there is a period coming, when the Jews, by their repentance and converſion to the Chriſtian faith, ſhall again be received into the boſom of the church, and reſtored to their ancient privileges. In handling this part of my ſubject, I ſhall firſt inquire, What aſſurance the ſcripture gives us of this event. 2dly, What reaſon there is, in the nature of things, to expect it.

And, 1ſt, With reſpect to the aſſurance ſcripture gives us of this event, we may obſerve, there is hardly any thing oftener, or more expreſsly foretold, both in the Old and New Teſtament. To quote all the paſſages relating to it, would be an endleſs taſk; I ſhall therefore content myſelf with ſome of the chief: The firſt is, Jer. xxxi. 31. "Behold, the days come, "ſaith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant "with the houſe of Iſrael, and with the houſe of "Judah, not according to the covenant that I made "with their fathers, in the day that I took them "by the hand, to bring them out of the land of "Egypt," &c.

That the covenant, here ſpoken of, can be no other than the goſpel covenant or diſpenſation, is evident, not only from the application which the Apoſtle makes of this paſſage in his Epiſtle to the Hebrews, but alſo from the whole ſcope and tenor of it. 1. It is called a new covenant; which, as the Apoſtle obſerves, implies, that it was to ſupplant the former covenant, and to occaſion the abrogation thereof.

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2. It is ſaid, not to be according to the covenant which God made with their fathers; which implies, that it was to be a better and more perfect covenant. It is alſo deſcribed as containing a promiſe of divine aid, which the Sinai covenant did not: "I will put "my law in their inward parts, and write it in their "hearts." All which characters agree ſo exactly with the goſpel-covenant, that there can be no room to doubt that it is the thing here meant.

This covenant God hath already made with ſpiritual Iſrael, or the Gentile churches; which, being ſubſtituted in the room of the Jews, and enjoying the ſame privileges which they formerly did, are ſometimes, in ſcripture, called by the ſame name. It was alſo made with part of the ſeed of Iſrael, according to the fleſh—when, in the time of the Apoſtles, multitudes, of that nation, were converted to the Chriſtian faith.

But as the greater part of them did then, and ſtill do reject the offer of the goſpel, it is evident this prophecy muſt refer to an event that is ſtill future; and can never be fully and literally accompliſhed, but by the general converſion of that people. And that this prophecy is to be literally underſtood, not of ſpiritual Iſrael, but of the Jewiſh nation, or Iſrael according to the fleſh, is evident from what follows in the 38th and following verſes; where the reſtoration of that people to their former privileges, and the poſſeſſion of their native country, is mentioned as one of the circumſtances that ſhould attend their converſion: "Behold, the days come, ſaith the Lord, that "the city ſhall be built to the Lord, from the tower "of Hananeel, unto the gate of the corner."

Another

Another prophecy to this purpoſe, we have in the thirty-ſeventh of Ezekiel, from the 21ſt verſe to the end: "Behold, I will take the children of Iſrael "from among the Heathen whither they be gone, "and will gather them on every ſide, and bring "them into their own land." And ver. 25, 26. "They ſhall dwell in the land that I have given unto "Jacob my ſervant—they and their children, and "their childrens children for ever: and my ſervant "David ſhall be their prince for ever. Moreover, I "will make a covenant of peace with them; it ſhall "be an everlaſting covenant," &c. Now, I appeal to the intelligent reader, whether this promiſe has ever yet been fulfilled, or can be fulfilled, but by a general converſion and reſtoration of that people to their former privileges. Another promiſe to this purpoſe we have, Hoſea iii. 4. "For the children of "Iſrael ſhall abide many days without a king, and "without a prince, and without a ſacrifice. After-"ward ſhall the children of Iſrael return, and ſeek "the Lord their God, and David their king, in the "latter days."

But the moſt remarkable of all the prophecies of the Old Teſtament concerning the converſion of the Jews, is that of Zech. xii. 10. "And I will pour upon "the houſe of David, and upon the inhabitants of "Jeruſalem, the ſpirit of grace and of ſupplication; "and they ſhall look upon me whom they have "pierced, and they ſhall mourn for him, as one that "mourneth for his only ſon, and ſhall be in bitter-"neſs for him, as one that is in bitterneſs for his "firſt-born." Ver. 11. "In that day ſhall there be a

" great mourning in Jeruſalem, as the mourning of " Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon."

To underſtand this prophecy, it is neceſſary to obſerve, that the Prophets, when they ſpeak in the firſt perſon, always mean either themſelves, or the Deity, whoſe ambaſſadors they are. This is evident from the whole ſtrain of prophecy; nor is there a ſingle inſtance of the contrary to be found in all the prophetic writings. But the ſmalleſt reflection may ſerve to convince any one, that it is not the Prophet himſelf who is here meant; for with what propriety can theſe words be applied to him, " I will pour upon the " houſe of David, and the inhabitants of Jeruſalem, " the ſpirit of grace and of ſupplication?" Beſides, in the next ſentence, the Prophet changes the ſtyle, and ſpeaks of the perſon here mentioned, as of one different from himſelf; " and they ſhall mourn, and " be in bitterneſs for him."

This prophecy therefore muſt be underſtood of ſome of the perſons of the glorious Trinity: and what follows, evidently ſhows which of them it is; " and they ſhall look upon me whom they have " pierced." This can only be applied to the ſecond Perſon, who, having in the fulneſs of time, aſſumed our nature, did therein ſuffer as an attonement for ſin, was wounded and pierced by the Jews, and upon whom they ſhall look in the latter days, and mourn.

We may farther obſerve, that, in the prophetic parts of ſcripture, there are many inſtances of an abrupt tranſition; or, the inſpired writer often changes the perſon of the ſpeaker, without giving any previous notice of it. An inſtance of this we have

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in the third chapter of Malachi, ver. 1. "Behold, I "will ſend my meſſenger, and he ſhall prepare the "way before me," &c. Theſe are the words of our bleſſed Saviour himſelf, informing the church of his future advent. The next, are the Prophet's own words: "And the Lord whom ye ſeek, ſhall ſud-"denly come to his temple." A like tranſition we have in the paſſage now under our conſideration, where the Prophet firſt ſpeaks to us in the name of the eternal Word, and then in his own name: "I will pour upon the houſe of David, and upon "the inhabitants of Jeruſalem, the ſpirit of grace "and of ſupplication:" Theſe are the words of our bleſſed Saviour. "And they ſhall mourn, and be "in bitterneſs for him," are the Prophet's own words.

This prophecy was in ſome meaſure accompliſhed, by the repentance of the Jews, who were converted by the miracles which happened at our Saviour's death; and ſtill farther, by the repentance of thoſe who were afterwards converted by the preaching of the Apoſtles. But all theſe partial converſions come far ſhort of that here foretold by the Prophet, which is plainly deſcribed as an univerſal or national thing, like the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon; that is, like the mourning of the Jews for the death of Joſiah, who was ſlain at Hadadrimmon, which was the greateſt mourning the Jews were acquainted with, and on that account grew up into a proverb.

And ſtill more clearly to ſhow, that this mourning of the Jews, for the crucifixion of their Meſſiah, is to be a national thing, the Prophet adds, in the verſes

pect it: nor is this an idle ſpeculation; for, ſince the converſion of the Jews is an event foretold in ſcripture, an event that is greatly for the honour and intereſt of Chriſtianity, it cannot but be matter of joy to every well-diſpoſed mind, and help to ſtrengthen his faith, to ſee that, notwithſtanding any objections that can be made to the probability of it, there is ſtill the greateſt reaſon to believe it will one day take place.

And, in the firſt place, one ground we have to hope for the converſion of the Jews, is, that they ſtill acknowledge the divine authority of the ſcriptures of the Old Teſtament; this, as it makes their conviction the eaſier, ſo it renders their converſion the more probable.

There is ſo cloſe a connection between the Old and New Teſtament, that it is ſurpriſing how any that own the divine authority of the one, can deny that of the other. There are, in the former, ſo many prophecies that never were, nor can be accompliſhed, but by the events recorded in the latter; ſo many precepts which, abſtracting from their relation to the goſpel, have no beneficial or moral tendency; ſo many myſteries and obſcurities that can never be explained, without having recourſe to the doctrines of Chriſtianity, that to acknowledge the divine authority of the one, without owning that of the other, ſeems to be of all things the moſt abſurd. And though the Jews, notwithſtanding the force of this argument, ſtill continue to deny our Saviour's divine authority, and to look for another Meſſiah, yet if there is reaſon in man, the abſurdity of any opinion

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is at leaſt a probable argument that men will, ſome time or other, give it up.

The Deiſt, who denies divine revelation altogether, is apparently not ſo eaſily to be convinced, becauſe, in reaſoning with him, you have fewer principles to go upon. There are comparatively few religious or moral truths owned by him, from which you can deduce any arguments in favour of Chriſtianity, that may be of uſe to convince him. But the Jews acknowledge moſt of the truths that are believed by the Chriſtian; not only that there is one God, but alſo that there is one Saviour, or Meſſiah, and that the prophecies of the Old Teſtament concerning him, were dictated by the holy Spirit. The principal difference between them and us, is, whether he be yet come; and certainly the leſs difference there is betwixt two parties, one would imagine it ſhould be the eaſier to reconcile them. It is indeed ſurpriſing, that the Jews ſhould have ſo long reſiſted the clear evidences of ſcripture; but this is no reaſon why we ſhould deſpair of their converſion. The long continuance of any thing, is no proof of its perpetual duration. How long did the errors and corruptions of Popery overſpread the Chriſtian church, and yet the light of divine truth broke out at length? and how did the goſpel, which is the only true religion, prevail over the idolatry of the Heathen world? and is there not reaſon to think it will at length prevail over the errors and prejudices of the Jews, that, having been ſo long diſappointed of a temporal kingdom, wearied with the perſecutions they have ſuffered on account of their religion, and aſhamed of the many extravagancies into which their carnal notions concern-

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ing the Meſſiah have betrayed them, they will at length give them up, and acquieſce in Chriſt Jeſus, as the only Saviour promiſed to their fathers?

Another reaſon we have to hope for the converſion of the Jews, is, that they have acceſs to the means of conviction. They live generally amidſt a people profeſſing Chriſtianity; and, by, converſing with them, have an opportunity of learning the principles and grounds of our religion, which, we truſt, are ſufficiently clear to convince any impartial inquirer of their truth. And though the Jews prejudices, and hopes of a temporal kingdom, have hitherto ſhut their eyes, and hindered them from diſcerning the evidences of our religion, yet it is to be hoped, that, when length of time hath weakened their prejudices, and cooled their enmity at the Chriſtian name, a more impartial inquiry will lead them to a diſcovery of the truth.

Some, perhaps, will imagine this argument to have rather a contrary tendency, and that inſtead of adding to the probability of the converſion of the Jews, it ſeems rather to detract from it. A perſon's having long had acceſs to the means of grace, without being converted or reformed by them, ſeems rather to exclude the hope of his converſion; yet certainly there is more reaſon to hope for the converſion of ſuch a perſon, if he ſtill has acceſs to the means of grace, than if he were in a ſituation where he could have no acceſs to them.

A perſon who has long been under the hands of the phyſician, and on whom the power of medicine has often been tried in vain, is evidently in a more hopeleſs condition, than if no attempt had ever been made

made for the recovery of his health; yet if he ſtill has acceſs to the proper remedy, or to the aid of able and faithful Phyſicians, there is certainly more hope of his recovery, than if he were in a ſituation in which he could have no acceſs to theſe things.

Had the Jews, during their preſent ſtate of infidelity, obtained a ſettlement either in their own country, or any other part of the world, at a diſtance from the nations that make profeſſion of the Chriſtian Religion, or where they ſhould have had leſs acceſs to converſe with them, their converſion would alſo have been leſs probable: But their continuing to live in ſuch numbers among Chriſtians, and to be in a ſituation that gives them acceſs to know the evidences of Chriſtianity, affords, at leaſt, ſome ground to hope that they may one day be brought to the acknowledgement of it; and though they have hitherto been proof againſt all attempts made to convince them, yet as Divinity, and the knowledge of the Scriptures, as well as of the Arts and Sciences, is daily improving and advancing towards perfection, by which means many new proofs in ſupport of Chriſtianity have been of late diſcovered, and many prophecies of the Old Teſtament concerning our Saviour ſet in a clearer light, it is probable we ſhall at length be able to demonſtrate the truth of our religion with ſuch evidence, as ſhall be ſufficient to conquer the prejudices of that obſtinate people. But to this it may be objected, that ſeeing the Jews withſtood the force of the preaching and miracles of our Saviour and his Apoſtles, there is little reaſon to think that any arguments we can now produce will prevail with them. To this it may be anſwered,

that, in order to convince the Jews of the truth of the Goſpel, it does not ſeem neceſſary that they ſhould have the ſame evidence of it which they had who lived in the times of the Apoſtles. The ſame degree of evidence is not neceſſary to the conviction of all men, nor of the ſame perſon at different times. Faith depends as much on the inward diſpoſition of the mind, as on the ſtrength and number of external proofs; and a much leſs degree of evidence will ſatisfy a good man, than one of an oppoſite character. This being granted, (which might be proved if neceſſary) the unbelief of the Jews, in the times of the Apoſtles, can be no objection to the poſſibility of their converſion in after ages, unleſs we could prove them equally wicked and abandoned; a taſk that would be as difficult as uncharitable

The Jews, in the times of our Saviour, were the moſt wicked generation that ever exiſted, as appears from the account given of them by the Evangeliſts and their own hiſtorian Joſephus; and though their poſterity are not much beholden to fame, yet there is no reaſon to think they are quite ſo bad, much leſs that they both are, and will be ſo, in all ſucceeding ages.

It is indeed difficult to determine the degrees in which virtue or vice prevail amongſt a people in different ages. But if we may judge of the preſent temper of the Jewiſh nation by the things they have ſuffered, and by the natural tendency of the diſpenſations of Providence towards them ſince their diſperſion, there is reaſon to think it is conſiderably meliorated. Many are the perſecutions they have ſuffered, not only among Chriſtians, but in all parts of the

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world where they have reſided: Often have they been deluded by falſe Meſſiah's, and diſappointed in their carnal hopes; and as theſe things have a natural tendency to humble their pride, and convince them of their error, it is hardly to be ſuppoſed but they have had ſome good effect, though they have not yet produced the one that we could wiſh. Though they are not yet convinced of the falſehood of their peculiar tenets, yet the aſſent, by which they adhere to them, may be conſiderably weakened; and therefore the ſame evidence for the truth of the goſpel does not ſeem neceſſary to the converſion of the Jews now as in the days of the Apoſtles, and yet it may doubted whether the evidences of Chriſtianity are any thing at all diminiſhed from what they were then. It is true, we ſee no miracles wrought in confirmation of it; but we have all the reaſon in the world to believe that they were wrought. Beſides the teſtimony of the ſacred writers, and ancient fathers of the Chriſtian church, we have the acknowledgement of ſome of the bittereſt enemies of Chriſtianity in ancient times in favour of our Saviour's miracles. We have not the lively preachings of the apoſtles to perſuade us, but we have their writings and many of their ſermons ſtill on record. We have alſo many proofs of the Goſpel which they who lived in the time of its publication wanted; ſuch as the care of Providence in preſerving it ſo long in the world; in ſupporting it againſt ſo many enemies, and reſcuing it when buried under the rubbiſh of antichriſtian errors: To which we may add, the accompliſhment of the prophecies both of the Old and New Teſtament concerning the

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lot of the church in the latter days, particularly concerning the riſe and fall of the Papacy. So that there is no reaſon to deſpair of the converſion of the Jews for want of evidence to convince them.

3 Another reaſon we have to hope for the converſion of the Jews, is the ſucceſs that the Goſpel had amongſt them at the firſt promulgation thereof.

In handling the laſt head, I aſſerted, that the Jews of that time were the moſt wicked generation of men that ever exiſted. But this is only to be underſtood of the greater part of them; for we are informed by the Evangeliſt, that great numbers of them were converted by the preaching of the apoſtles; which ſhews the poſſibility of the Jews' converſion, and ſo removes a doubt which is apt to riſe in the mind when reflecting on this ſubject, viz. that there is ſomething naturally in the diſpoſition of that people incompatible with the belief of the Goſpel: It ſhews alſo the probability of their converſion; for the Jews, who were brought in at that time, were a kind of firſt fruits or earneſt of the general converſion, and ingathering of that people: It was a ſign, that Providence had ſtill a kindneſs for them; that though he had determined, for his own wiſe ends, to exclude them from the church for a time, yet he would not finally caſt them off. Had he not had ſome deſigns of mercy towards them, he might have rejected them altogether, which would have rendered his juſtice in inflicting that judgment more remarkable, and conſequently, ſo far as we can judge, have anſwered the deſign of it better. He would not in all probability have admitted ſuch numbers of them into the Chriſtian church, ſeeing a much

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leſs number might have ſerved for propagating the Chriſtian religion, it being only a few of thoſe who had embraced the Goſpel that were thus employed. Nay, it appears from the words of the apoſtle Peter in his firſt ſermon to the Jews, that even ſome of thoſe who had been acceſſary to our Saviour's crucifixion, were among the number of thoſe that were converted thereby; which ſhews, that the ſin of crucifying the Saviour, great as it was, was not unpardonable, at leaſt in thoſe who did it through ignorance: And if it did not hinder the mercy of God from reaching them that were actually guilty, much leſs can it prove an inſuperable bar to the converſion of their poſterity.

Another reaſon which renders the future converſion of the Jews, as well as of the Heathen and Mahometan nations, probable, is founded in the effect that learning and the culture of the liberal arts has upon the human mind. Theſe have made a wonderful progreſs among Chriſtians in theſe laſt ages; and if ever they ſhall extend their beneficial influence to the other nations of the earth, as there is reaſon to think they will, it is to be hoped they may be a means of opening their eyes and convincing them of the truth of the Goſpel. That learning is calculated to produce this effect, there can be no room to doubt, if we attend to the effect which it is known to have in other caſes. It enlightens the mind, and enables it to comprehend the force of an argument; it cures us of our prejudices, and lays us open to conviction, by undeceiving our abuſed imaginations, and ſhewing us the falſehood of many opinions we take up in our youth; it leſſens the conceit

conceit we naturally have of our own judgment, and diſpoſes us to lean to the judgment of others; by exerciſing our reaſon it improves it, and qualifies the mind for the inveſtigation of truth. The faculty of reaſon, like all others, is improved by exerciſe. By being accuſtomed to the ſearch of truth, we acquire a facility in tracing it; and not only ſo, but it alſo ſtrengthens our natural love of it. and, by prompting us to purſue it with ardour, contributes greatly to the diſcovery of it. Therefore, if ever learning ſhall happen to prevail amongſt the Jews and other unbelieving nations, it muſt be of great uſe to the propagation of Chriſtianity amongſt them.

If it ſhould be objected, that many of the Jews, and ſome alſo of the other unbelieving nations, are already enlightened to a conſiderable degree. and yet their learning has produced no ſuch effect upon them, the anſwer is eaſy, that learning does not produce this effect of itſelf, but is only a means; beſides, it is not every degree of learning that is effectual to remove our prejudices, and a greater meaſure of it may produce that effect which a leſſer cannot. To which we may add, that the number of thoſe who truly deſerve the name of learned among the Jews, as well as other unbelieving nations, has been hitherto comparatively ſpeaking very ſmall; and when this is the caſe, the effect that learning has upon the mind is neither ſo conſiderable, nor ſo eaſily known.

That learning will one day have a larger ſpread, and extend itſelf to all the dark corners of the earth, there is the greateſt reaſon to believe, both from the aſtoniſhing

aſtoniſhing progreſs it has already made, and alſo from the temporal advantages that flow from it.

It is only but three hundred years ſince the whole world was overſpread with ignorance and barbariſm, and now all the uſeful branches of learning are cultivated to greater perfection than ever they were in any former age, not only through all Europe, but alſo by means of our colonies in many other parts of the world. This amazing progreſs of learning, as it cannot be aſcribed to any thing but the kindneſs of Providence, ſo it ſeems to prognoſticate ſome great revolution for the good of mankind; and as it is ſtill increaſing, ſo there is reaſon, from the ſame ground, to hope that it will increaſe more and more, until it has overſpread the whole habitable world, eſpecially as the barbarous nations that formerly put a ſtop to its progreſs, are now in a great meaſure civilized, ſo that there ſeems to be nothing to fear from that quarter.

Another reaſon we have to hope for the converſion of the Jews is the declenſion of Popery, or the decay of the Roman Catholic religion.

Of all the cauſes that have contributed to harden that people in their infidelity, there is none that has had a greater effect than the idolatry and perſecuting ſpirit of the church of Rome.

The Jews having, from their ſufferings in time of the Babyloniſh captivity, juſtly conceived the ſtrongeſt averſion to idolatry, and not being able to diſtinguiſh between the pure genuine doctrines of Chriſtianity, and thoſe that are held by its degenerate profeſſors, it is impoſſible but they muſt have the ſtrongeſt

ſtrongeſt averſion to a religion, the greater part of whoſe profeſſors are given to the worſhip of images; and the cruel perſecutions they have ſo often ſuffered from theſe idolatrous Chriſtians, muſt have added to their prejudices, and imbittered their ſpirits ſtill more againſt the Chriſtian religion. But now that Popery is viſibly on the decline, it is to be hoped this obſtacle to the converſion of the Jews will ere long be removed. The total overthrow of Popery is perhaps an event yet at ſome diſtance; but as it is now long ſince it began to fall, and has been continually falling almoſt ever ſince, we need not doubt but Providence will in his good time give it a blow at the root: And though it has of late ſet up a head in theſe countries, and it may be is making the ſame efforts in other parts of the world alſo, yet theſe we truſt are only like the laſt efforts or ſtruggles of a dying man, the ſigns not of returning health, but of approaching diſſolution.

But the converſion of the Jews will appear ſtill more probable, if we conſider the wonderful effects of time, which not only delights to produce the moſt ſurpriſing and unexpected events, ſuch as this we are now talking of, but has alſo a wonderful effect to cool our paſſions, and cure us of our prejudices. The prejudices of nations and of families are indeed generally more laſting, as is alſo the ſubject in which they reſide; yet time we ſee puts an end to them too.

Many feuds and animoſities that have ſubſiſted for ages betwixt different families and kingdoms of the world, are now happily extinguiſhed, and it is to be hoped that time will alſo extinguiſh the reſentment and prejudices of the Jews. Indeed their prejudices have

have already laſted ſo long, that they cannot be accounted for, without having recourſe to a particular Providence, either to what is commonly called a judicial blindneſs, or to a train of external cauſes ſerving to keep them up; and whether we aſcribe it to the firſt or ſecond of theſe cauſes, it appears equally to be the work of God, ſince it is impoſſible, that a train of events or external cauſes ſhould combine to keep up the prejudices of any people ſo long without a ſpecial direction of Providence. But if ever it ſhall pleaſe God to remove theſe cauſes, as there is the greateſt reaſon, both from his goodneſs and the promiſes of Scriptures, to believe he will, then the prejudices of the Jews, like thoſe of other people, muſt fall of courſe.

Another reaſon for expecting the converſion of the Jews, is, that truth is of a prevailing nature.

When I ſpoke of the effect that time has on the opinions of men, it was chiefly to be underſtood of their erroneous opinions; for though it ſometimes proves fatal to the truth alſo, yet thoſe opinions which have this for their ſupport, are generally of a nature more durable and laſting. The more we examine ſuch opinions the more we are confirmed in our belief of them, whereas a little time and reflection is often all that is neceſſary to the deſtruction of error. It muſt indeed be owned, that religious truths are expoſed to greater dangers than others, becauſe the corruption of human nature is againſt them, and men are often prompted by paſſion and prejudice to oppoſe them; but then they have alſo a more powerful aſſiſtance from the God of truth, whoſe intereſt and honour are concerned to ſupport them.

Another reaſon for expecting the converſion of the Jews, is founded on the connection it ſeems to have with their worldly intereſt. It is intereſt that rules the world, and there is no greater probability that a man will act ſuch a part, than if it appears clearly to be for his worldly advantage. What effect the converſion of the Jews would have on their worldly ſtate and circumſtances, without the aid of divine revelation, we could not poſitively ſay; but ſo far as we can judge, it would be much every way for their advantage. It would not only free them from the ſcorn and perſecution they have ſo long ſuſtained on account of their religion, and procure them the eſteem of all good men, but alſo intitle them to the rights and privileges of citizens in all parts of the Chriſtian world. This is an advantage which they have on many occaſions ſhown great anxiety to obtain, and which it is to be hoped may one day be a means of perſuading them to embrace Chriſtianity: not that I imagine the Jews will ever change their religion for the ſake of worldly gain, much leſs do I mean that they ought to do it from ſuch a motive; yet certainly the conſideration, that it is for their worldly intereſt to embrace the Goſpel, added to the other grounds we have to expect their converſion, increaſes the probability thereof. But it will be objected, that the preſent ſtate of the Jews is not without its advantages. They are generally rich, and ſeemingly as happy as other people; and therefore the conſideration of the temporal advantages that are likely to attend a change in their religion, muſt have but little weight with them. But it is enough to my purpoſe, to ſhow that the Jews do

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not like their ſituation; for he that thinks himſelf unhappy in his preſent ſituation, is every whit as deſirous of a change as he that really is ſo. And that the Jews have always looked upon themſelves as unhappy in their preſent ſtate, is evident from the many attempts they have made to change it; I mean not only their attempts to recover their old inheritance, but likewiſe their endeavours to obtain the privileges of citizens in other countries. And the numberleſs diſappointments they have met with, ſhew that it is in vain for them to expect a redreſs of their grievances, till, by their repentance and acknowledgment of the truth, they have made their peace with Chriſt. "Behold your "houſe is left unto you deſolate; for verily I ſay "unto you, ye ſhall not ſee me henceforth till ye "ſhall ſay, Bleſſed is he that cometh in the name of "the Lord:" That is, ye ſhall not enjoy my countenance and favour till you acknowledge your errors, and join with the Chriſtian church in ſaying, "Bleſs-"ed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord:" That is, looking and longing for my ſecond appearance; or, taking the words literally, "Ye ſhall not ſee me," &c. may ſignify, from this time ye ſhall ſee me no more, till after your converſion and acknowledgment of the truth, when ye ſhall long to ſee me, and join with my people in praying for my ſecond coming. Theſe words of our Saviour, taking them in the literal ſenſe, do not imply that his ſecond coming was to be either immediately or ſoon after the converſion of the Jews, but only that it was not to be till then. They ſeem to me rather to imply the contrary, viz. that

that there would be ſome conſiderable time betwixt theſe two events; that ſeeing they had deſpiſed and rejected him, they ſhould not ſee him again till they were made to long and pray for his appearance. But whatever is of this, they certainly imply, that the Jews are to be converted ſome time or other before the coming of our Saviour; for he ſays expreſsly, that he will not come, or, which is the ſame thing, that they ſhall not ſee him again till they acknowledge him as their Saviour, and join with the church in praying for his coming. And therefore, as certainly as it is decreed of God that he ſhall once more appear in our world; ſo certain is it that the Jews ſhall one day make the profeſſion of the Chriſtian religion: or, taking the words literally, "Ye ſhall not ſee me "henceforth;" that is, from this time forth ye ſhall ſee me no more till my coming to judgment, when, having been previouſly converted, ye ſhall join with my people in ſaying, "Bleſſed is he that cometh in "the name of the Lord."

I ſhall conclude this head with the words of our Apoſtle, verſe 24th of this chapter: For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree, which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree, how much more ſhall theſe which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree? That is, in plain language, the converſion of the Jews is apparently a thing much eaſier to be effected, and more likely to happen, than that of the Gentiles ſeemed to be before the publication of the Goſpel; and that for the following reaſons: The religion of the Gentiles was totally different from the Chriſtian, both as

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to the object and manner of their worſhip; whereas the religion of the Jews has a very near affinity with it. Both Jews and Chriſtians agree in having an abhorance of idolatry and image-worſhip; both believe in one God, the creator of all things, in his providence, in a judgment to come, the reſurrection of the dead, and many other articles of religion; and therefore one would think it were eaſier to reconcile the Jews to thoſe other points wherein they and Chriſtians differ, than it was to perſuade the Gentiles to embrace a religion that was totally different from their own. The Gentiles were aliens to the commonwealth of Iſrael, and ſtrangers to the covenant of promiſe. They knew little or nothing of the Meſſiah or his kingdom, of the promiſes made to the fathers, or of the predictions of the prophets; in a word, every thing relating to the Meſſiah was a myſtery to them, contrary to their former notions, and the religious tenets handed down to them by their anceſtors. This is not the caſe with the modern Jews. They are many of them well verſed in the Scriptures, and nothing but a fair impartial examination of them ſeems neceſſary to their converſion. We may add to this, that as the apoſtles and firſt preachers of the Goſpel were of the Jewiſh nation, nay, Chriſt himſelf, the bleſſed author of our religion, was according to the fleſh of the ſeed of Judah, one would imagine that the ties of blood, added to other motives, muſt one day help to draw them to the acknowledgment of the truth as it is in Chriſt Jeſus.

I now proceed to the practical improvement of what has been ſaid.

I doubt not but ſome of you have been ſaying in your hearts, to what purpoſe is this long diſcourſe concerning the Jews, we doubt not of their converſion, or of the truth of any thing that has been ſaid; but what is that to us. In anſwer to this, it were perhaps ſufficient to ſay, that the Scriptures are full of this doctrine, and therefore it is certainly worth our while to beſtow a little ſerious conſideration upon it. To deny this, were to arraign the wiſdom of the Holy Spirit, who has been pleaſed to reveal ſo much to us concerning it, and indeed the uſe of it is obvious.

In the firſt place, this doctrine may ſerve to ſtrengthen and confirm our faith. Faith in the beſt is often weak, and needs to be ſtrengthened; and I know not any means more likely to do it than a ſerious conſideration of the argument I am now upon.

The preſervation of the Jews, through a ſeries of ſo many ages, notwithſtanding the many calamities and perſecutions they have ſuſtained, is a ſtanding miracle and teſtimony to the truth of our religion.

To this very day we behold the people of whom ſo many wonderful things are recorded in Scripture, though it is now above ſeventeen hundred years ſince their diſperſion, and they have undergone more and greater changes than any other people in the world ever did. Had it not been for this, ſome of our modern infidels would have denied that ever there was ſuch a people. Is it not ſomething extraordinary, and like a miracle, that, amidſt all the changes and revolutions that have happened in the world, the irruption of the barbarous nations, the riſe and fall of empires, the many perſecutions they themſelves have ſuſtained,

ed, and their emigrations from one country to another, they have neither been totally extirpated, nor confounded with the reſt of mankind, nor yet prevailed upon to change their religion, though they have had every worldly motive to induce them ſo to do. They who deny there is any thing extraordinary in this, ought either to produce ſome inſtance ſimilar to it from hiſtory, or to account for it in a rational way; neither of which has yet been done, and I dare ſay, never will.

To aſcribe this to peculiarity of temper, is fooliſh to the laſt degree? The Jews are naturally, juſt like other people, ſome better, ſome worſe; ſome men of capacity, others of a weak underſtanding; nor is there any real difference betwixt them and other men but what is owing to their unbelief, and the curſe of God that lies upon them. But this is not the only proof that the hiſtory of the Jewiſh nation affords of the truth of the Goſpel: The unparalleled ſufferings which befel them ſhortly after their rejecting the call of the Goſpel; the numberleſs perſecutions they have ſince indured, not only among Chriſtians, but in every part of the world where they have reſided; the repeated diſappointments they have met with, in endeavouring to recover the poſſeſſion of their native country; their preſent unſettled vagabond ſtate, and the contempt in which they are held by almoſt all nations; as they cannot be aſcribed to any other cauſe but the indignation of Providence againſt them for their unbelief, and ſin of crucifying the Meſſiah, ſo they afford one of the ſtrongeſt proofs that can be deſired of the truth of our religion.

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The apoſtle tells us, that for their unbelief they were broken off, and we may defy the wit of man to aſſign any other reaſon for it. But that their ſin in crucifying the Meſſiah, and continuing to reject the offers of the Goſpel, is the only cauſe of their ſufferings, is evident from this, that no other ſin can be imputed to them of which other nations have not been as guilty as they. And yet, I think Providence never afflicted any other nation under heaven as long and as ſeverely as he has done them. But are there not other nations who diſbelieve the Goſpel as well as the Jews, and yet never ſuffered ſuch things? why then ſhould we aſcribe their ſufferings to that cauſe? the anſwer is eaſy, No other nation ever had ſuch acceſs to know the truth of the Goſpel; no other nation ever crucified the Saviour, or ſhewed ſuch bitter enmity to the Chriſtian name; and therefore their unbelief is not ſo henious.

Had the Jews been converted to the Chriſtian faith, and ſtill ſubject to the ſame ſufferings; or had they, notwithſtanding their continued impenitence and oppoſition to the Chriſtian faith, been able to obtain a redreſs of their grievances, either a ſettlement in their own country, or any other part of the world, the enemies of Chriſtianity would have had ſomething to ſay; but as the ſufferings of that people firſt began with their rejecting of the Goſpel, and have all along kept pace with their unbelief, can there be a clearer proof, that the one is the cauſe of the other. But this is not all: In the preſervation of the Jews as a diſtinct people, and in their preſent afflicted ſtate, there are fulfilled a vaſt number of prophecies, both in the

Old

Old and New Teſtament concerning them. Even while they were in the wilderneſs, it was prophecied of them by Balaam, "Behold the people ſhall dwell "alone, and ſhall not be reckoned among the nations." So Jeremiah xxx. 11. "Though I make a full end "of all the nations, whether I have ſcattered thee; or "as it may be rendered, by whom I have ſcattered "thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee."

All the ancient enemies of the Jews, that Providence formerly employed to chaſtiſe them, the Babylonians, Grecians, Romans, &c. are now no more; while the Jews, who, in compariſon of theſe nations, were originally but a handful, ſtill continue a diſtinct people, and probably as numerous as ever they were in any former age. But that of Hoſ. chap. iii. 4, and 5 verſes, is ſtill more remarkable: "For the chil-"dren of Iſrael ſhall abide many days without a king, "and without a prince, and without a ſacrifice, and "without an image, and without an ephod, and with-"out a teraphim. Afterward ſhall the children of "Iſrael return, and ſeek the Lord their God, and "David their king; and ſhall fear the Lord and his "goodneſs in the latter days."

To the ſame purpoſe, is that of Amos, ix. 8. "Be-"hold, the eyes of the Lord are upon the ſinful na-"tion, and I will deſtroy it from off the face of the "earth; ſaving that I will not utterly deſtroy the "houſe of Jacob: For lo, I will command, and I will "ſift the houſe of Iſrael among all nations, like as "corn is ſifted in a ſieve, yet ſhall not the leaſt grain "fall upon earth." To which we may add, theſe words of our Saviour; "And Jeruſalem ſhall be

" trodden down of the Gentiles, till the times of the " Gentiles be fulfilled. Behold, your houſe is left unto " you deſolate; for verily, I ſay unto you, ye ſhall not " ſee my face, till ye ſay, bleſſed is he that cometh in " the name of the Lord." All which prophecies, and many more that might be mentioned, have been and are ſo exactly fulfilled in the hiſtory and preſent ſtate of the Jewiſh nation, as muſt convince every reaſonable mind, that the penmen of them were divinely inſpired.

Thus, my friends, I have ſhewn you, by a variety of arguments taken from this one ſubject, the hiſtory and preſent ſtate of the Jews, that Scripture is God's word, and the Goſpel of Chriſt the only true religion; and if ſo, then it concerns us above all things to be truly religious, to fear God, and keep his commandments; for if we do ſo, then the Goſpel aſſures us that everlaſting happineſs and glory will be our reward at laſt.

Again, is it ſo that the Jews are to be converted, and brought into the Chriſtian church? This ſhould be matter of joy to every well-diſpoſed mind. The addition of ſo great a body of men as the Jews to the Chriſtian church, muſt bring great glory to the name of Chriſt, and be the means of ſaving many precious ſouls; and therefore, if we have any ſincere love to our Redeemer, or charity towards our fellow-creatures, we ſhould rejoice at the proſpect of it. And the more probable it appears, the greater ſhould our joy be. It ſhould alſo comfort us under the melancholy thoughts, which the preſent ſtate of our religion is apt to ſuggeſt.

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It cannot but affect every well-diſpoſed mind to ſee how infidelity has increaſed of late; how the ordinances of God, and the doctrines of his religion are deſpiſed by men of all ranks; how thin our meetings for Divine Worſhip generally are; and how ſeldom honoured by the great: how much religious converſation is out of faſhion, and how few there are now a-days who make conſcience of worſhipping God in their families: I ſay, to ſee theſe, and many other ſigns of the decay of piety among us, cannot but affect every well-diſpoſed mind; and it may be, even raiſe doubts in them concerning the reality of religion.

Well Chriſtian, let this be thy comfort, there is a time coming, and probably not very diſtant, when religion ſhall flouriſh again, and flouriſh more glorioufly than it hath ever yet done; when God will fulfill all his promiſes concerning the glory of the latter days, when both Jew and Gentile ſhall be brought in, and the earth be full of the glory of the Lord. O that it would pleaſe God to haſten that happy time, that the ſalvation of Iſrael were come out of Zion, when the Lord bringeth back the captivity of his people, Jacob ſhall rejoice, and Iſrael be glad.

HAVING, in the preceding diſcourſe, ſhown that the converſion of the Jews is an event which we have all imaginable ground to expect, I ſhall now add a few thoughts concerning their reſtoration or return to their native country. This is an event nearly connected with the former, as being to happen at the ſame time with it, and is indeed the conſequence of it. For if their captivity and diſperſion was at firſt a puniſhment inflicted on them for their diſobedience to the call of the Goſpel, as has been already proved, then the diſſolution of their captivity and reſtoration to their native country, muſt be the conſequence of their repentance: For the cauſe being removed, the effect muſt alſo ceaſe. It is true, Providence does not always reſtore to men, upon their repentance, the temporal bleſſings they have forfeited by ſin; becauſe, with reſpect to individuals, the reward promiſed to repentance is reſerved to a future ſtate; but his manner of dealing with nations is ſomewhat different: Theſe being incapable of any reward hereafter, are, for the moſt part, recompenſed in this world. Thus we find that the Iſraelites of old no ſooner repented and ſought the Lord, than he forgave them, and reſtored them to their former proſperity; and if ever they repent of the ſin which at preſent cleaves to them, there is no reaſon to doubt but he will do ſo ſtill. But beſides this argument from reaſon, Scripture is no leſs poſitive with reſpect to the reſtoration of the Jews, than it is with reſpect to their converſion.

Thus,

Thus, Levit. xxvi. 40, 41, 42. God, after forewarning them of the conſequence, in caſe they forſook him, and broke his commandments, viz. that he would ſcatter them among the Heathen, and make their land deſolate, adds in the 40th and following verſes, "If "they ſhall confeſs their iniquity and the iniquity of "their fathers, that they have walked contrary to "me, and that I alſo have walked contrary to them, "and have brought them into the land of their ene-"mies; if then their uncircumciſed hearts be hum-"bled, and they then accept of the puniſhment of their "iniquity, then will I remember my covenant with "Jacob, &c. and I will remember the land." But what was the covenant that God made with theſe patriarchs but this, that he would give the land of Canaan as an inheritance, and a perpetual poſſeſſion to their poſterity, in caſe they continued obedient to his commands; and therefore, when God promiſes in this place to remember that covenant, what can it ſignify, but his reſtoring to them the poſſeſſion of their ancient inheritance; or what elſe can be the meaning of theſe words, "And I will remember the "land," but this, that God would put an end to its deſolations, by reſtoring it to its ancient inhabitants to be cultivate and repleniſhed by them. It therefore follows, that if ever the Jews repent and turn to the Lord, he is bound by this promiſe to reſtore to them the poſſeſſion of their native country. This promiſe is repeated, and in ſtill ſtronger terms, in the xxxth of Deut. from the beginning to the 6th verſe. "And it ſhall come to paſs when all theſe things are "come upon thee, the bleſſing and the curſe which

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" I have ſet before thee, and thou ſhalt call them to
" mind among all the nations whether the Lord thy
" God hath driven thee, and ſhall return unto the
" Lord thy God and obey his voice," &c. verſe 3d,
" That then the Lord thy God will turn thy captivity,
" and have compaſſion on thee, and will return and
" gather thee from all nations whither he hath ſcat-
" tered thee: If any of thine be driven out unto the
" utmoſt parts of heaven, from thence will the Lord
" thy God gather, and from thence will he fetch
" thee. And the Lord thy God will bring thee un-
" to the land which thy fathers poſſeſſed, and thou
" ſhalt poſſeſs it," &c. If it ſhould be ſaid, that this prophecy was fulfilled in the return of the Jews from the Babyloniſh captivity; I anſwer, there is no particular time here mentioned; but it is ſaid in general terms, that whenſoever the Jews, for their ſins, ſhould be led into captivity by their enemies, and ſcattered among the nations as they are at preſent; if they ſhall then repent and turn to the Lord, he will have mercy on them, and bring them again to the land which he gave to their fathers. Their reſtoration, therefore, muſt be the conſequence of their converſion. The ſame may be inferred, alſo from the words of the prayer which Solomon put up at the dedication of the temple, and the anſwer which God gave to it. In that prayer, Solomon begs of God, that in caſe his people Iſrael ſhould be led captive for their ſins, and turn again to him, and make ſupplication toward his houſe, that he would forgive them, and bring them again to the land he had given to their fathers. 1 Kings chap. viiith from the 47th

to

to the 50th verſe; and in the following chapter we are told, that God accepted his prayer.

Another proof of the future reſtoration of the Jews, is, that in many places of Scripture the return of the ten tribes is foretold; but as this event has never yet happened, it muſt be ſtill future: and if the ten tribes are yet to be reſtored, moſt certainly the Jews alſo. That very few of the ten tribes returned in Zerubbabel's time, appears from this, that there is no expreſs mention made of them by Ezra as there is of the other tribes, Ezra, Chap. i. and 5. We find indeed from the hiſtory of the Maccabees, Chap. vth, ix. and xv. that there were great numbers of Iſraelites in Paleſtine at that time; and in the Goſpel, there is mention made of ſome of the other tribes, as of one Anna, a propheteſs, of the tribe of Aſher: but notwithſtanding of this, it is the opinion of moſt learned men, that the greater part of the ten tribes have never yet returned. See Stackhouſe, or the Univerſal hiſtory. But that theſe tribes were to return, appears from the whole tenor of prophecy. To quote all the paſſages to this purpoſe would be tedious. Let theſe, therefore, which follow, ſuffice: Jer. xxxi. 4. "Again I will build thee, and thou ſhalt be built, O "virgin of Iſrael. Verſe 5. Thou ſhalt yet plant "vines upon the mountains of Samaria; the plant-"ers ſhall plant, and eat them as common things. "Verſe 8. Behold I will bring them from the north "country, and gather them from the coaſts of the "earth; and with them the blind and the lame, the "woman with child, and her that travaileth with "child together; a great company ſhall return thi-

"ther:

" ther: And verſe 17. There is hope in thine end,
" ſaith the Lord, that thy children ſhall come again
" to their own border." This verſe deſerves particular notice, as it not only ſhews that the return of the Iſraelites here ſpoken of is not yet paſt, but alſo that it is to happen in the latter days, or towards the end of the world; for what elſe can be the meaning of theſe words, There is hope in thine end. That the Iſraelites are never to ceaſe from being a nation, or to continue to the end of time, is expreſsly aſſerted in this very chapter, and ſeveral other places; and therefore their end alſo muſt be the end of the world. That the return of the Iſraelites is to be in the latter days, is alſo aſſerted Hoſ. iii. iv. v. verſe 27th. " Be-
" hold the days come, ſaith the Lord, that I will ſow
" the houſe of Iſrael, and the houſe of Judah, with
" the ſeed of man, and with the ſeed of beaſt; and it
" ſhall come to paſs, that like as I have watched o-
" ver them to pluck up, and to break down, and to
" deſtroy; ſo will I watch over them, to build and
" to plant, ſaith the Lord." And that this is to be in Goſpel times, is evident from what follows, verſe 31. " Behold the days come, ſaith the Lord, that I
" will make a new covenant with the houſe of Iſrael,
" and with the houſe of Judah, &c." So Jeremiah, xxxiii. and 7. " And I will cauſe the captivity of
" Judah, and the captivity of Iſrael to return, and
" will build them as at the firſt; and I will cleanſe
" them from all their iniquity, and ſo forth to the
" end of the chapter." and chap. xxiii. 7. " Be-
" hold the days come, ſaith the Lord, that they ſhall
" no more ſay the Lord liveth which brought up
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" the children of Iſrael out of the land of Egypt;
" but the Lord liveth which brought up, and which
" led the ſeed of the houſe of Iſrael out of the north
" country, and from all countries whither I had
" driven them, and they ſhall dwell in their own
" land." See alſo Ezek. xx. 23. and chap. xxxvi. from the 9th verſe unto the end. In theſe, and many other places that might be quoted if neceſſary, the reſtoration of the Iſraelites, or ten tribes, as they are commonly called, along with that of the Jews, is expreſsly foretold; but as the former were not reſtored at the time when the Jews were brought back from the Babyloniſh captivity, there muſt be a time, ſtill future, when all the tribes, both Jews and Iſraelites, ſhall be reſtored.

But beſides theſe paſſages, which prove the reſtoration of the Jews by way of inference, there are many in which it is expreſsly foretold. Thus Iſaiah, in the xi. chap. of his prophecy, at the 11th verſe, " And it ſhall come to paſs in that day, that the " Lord ſhall ſet his hand the ſecond time to recover " the remnant of his people that ſhall be left, from " Aſſyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and " from the iſlands of the ſea. And he ſhall ſet up " an enſign for the nations, and ſhall aſſemble the " outcaſts of Iſrael, and gather together the diſ- " perſed of Judah from the four corners of the earth. " The Lord ſhall ſet his hand the ſecond time to re- " cover the remnant of his people." This certainly refers to a time that is ſtill future, and means, that as the Lord brought back his people from their firſt captivity, in the time of Zerubbabel, ſo he will alſo

bring them back from their preſent captivity. There were indeed three different returns from the Babyloniſh captivity, as may be ſeen in Prideaux's hiſtory of that period; but none of theſe can be the return here ſpoken of; for they were all but parts of the ſame deliverance, or partial accompliſhments of the ſame promiſe, viz. that, at the end of ſeventy years, God would turn back the captivity of his people, and did, properly ſpeaking, make but one return, having all happened within the ſpace of forty years. Accordingly they are by hiſtorians commonly claſhed together, and conſidered as one; therefore none of them can be the return here ſpoken of by Iſaiah. Beſides, it is expreſsly ſaid, that this return is to happen in the times of the Goſpel, or after the coming of the Meſſiah. "And it ſhall come to paſs in that day, that the Lord "ſhall ſet his hand the ſecond time:" which phraſe, "that day," as is evident from the context, can mean nothing but that this event was to happen in Goſpel times, and conſequently is ſtill future. Another of thoſe paſſages where the return of the Jews is expreſsly foretold, is in the xxxvii. chap. of Ezek. from the 15th verſe to the end, which, as it is too long to be quoted, I would have the reader to conſult for his own ſatisfaction. That this prophecy was not fulfilled in the return of the Jews from the Babyloniſh captivity is evident, 1ſt, Becauſe it is expreſsly ſaid, that both the nations into which the Iſraelites were divided, viz. Ephraim, and the tribes that joined with him, and Judah, together with his aſſociate tribes, are to return, and to become one nation upon the mountains of Iſrael, which was not the caſe when

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the Jews returned from Babylon. 2dly, It is there alſo declared, in the ſtrongeſt terms, that God would never again caſt them off, or diſinherit them, which was not true of their firſt return neither; for they were in a very few centuries after that caſt off a ſecond time, and more miſerably waſted than before. "And they ſhall dwell in the land that I have given to Jacob "my ſervant; even they and their children, and their "childrens children for ever: And my ſervant David "ſhall be their prince for ever." Another remarkable paſſage to this purpoſe, is that famous prophecy concerning Gog, in the xxxviii. and xxxix. chap. of Ezek. In this paſſage there is indeed no expreſs mention of the return of the Jews, becauſe the Prophet had ſpoken of it in the plaineſt terms ſeveral times before, particularly in the two preceding chapters; but what is equally to our purpoſe, we have a long and particular account of an invaſion that is to be made upon the Jews by ſome great and powerful enemy, after they are brought back and again ſettled in Paleſtine. Among the circumſtances relative to this event mentioned by the Prophet, there are ſeveral which clearly ſhew, that this paſſage cannot be underſtood of any paſt event, and is only a continuation of the prophecy which we have in the two preceding chapters concerning the future reſtoration of the Jews, and the happineſs then to be enjoyed by them. Some indeed think that it refers to the time of the Seleucidæ; and the reaſon they give is, becauſe when Croeſus, the grandſon of Gyges, or Gog, who gave name to the country, was conquered by Cyrus, his kingdom became ſubject to the Perſians, and afterwards fell into the

the hands of the Seleucidae; ſo that they reigning over the ſame country and people over which Gog had formerly reigned, may, not without ſome ground, be thought to be here intended: and of all the Seleucidae, the 6th from Seleucus ſtands faireſt for it, viz. Antiochus Epiphanes, a type of Antichriſt, and fierce enemy of the Jews. But as there are ſeveral particulars in this prophecy which do not agree with the times of Antiochus, if it is to be underſtood of him at all, it muſt be underſtood of him only in a lower ſenſe, and as a type of a greater and more formidable enemy. For, in the firſt place, this invaſion of Judea by Gog, is deſcribed as happening ſoon after the return of the Jews from captivity, verſes 8. 11. 12. "In the latter days thou ſhalt come into the land "that is brought back from the ſword, and is gather-"ed out of many people againſt the mountains of "Iſrael which have been always waſte, and thou "ſhalt ſay, I will go up to the land of unwalled vil-"lages; I will go to them that are at reſt, that dwell "ſafely, all of them dwelling without walls, and "having neither bars nor gates," &c. This I ſay looks as if the people were but newly ſettled; whereas at the time when Antiochus Epiphanes invaded the land, the Jews were fully eſtabliſhed, and had been in poſſeſſion of it for near three hundred and fifty years. They had, moreover, fortified Jeruſalem with much labour and expence; and as this was done near two hundred years before the time of Antiochus Epiphanes, it is probable they had other fortified cities alſo; but when Gog invades them, they have no fortified cities, neither bars nor gates. 2dly, The vaſt preparations

preparations that Gog makes for this expedition, the greatneſs of his army, the multitude of nations that he calls to his aſſiſtance, and that join with him in it, do not correſpond with the invaſion and exploits of Antiochus; who, as he was only going to plunder a ſmall province that had revolted from him, or rather that was obnoxious to him on account of their religion, did not need ſuch mighty preparations, or ſo many aſſiſtants for that purpoſe: but were all the Jews and Iſraelites that are at preſent ſcattered throughout the world, aſſembled and again ſettled in the land of Canaan, I believe it would require all the forces that any power on earth could raiſe to diſpoſſeſs them; it would at leaſt ſeem much more neceſſary to raiſe ſuch an army as Gog's for that purpoſe. 3dly, Though the preciſe time when the events foretold in this prophecy are to happen is not mentioned, yet there are ſeveral things in it which plainly intimate that there was to be a ſucceſſion of many ages betwixt the publication of it and the events to which it refers; and, therefore, it may reaſonably be thought to look beyond the times of Antiochus Epiphanes. Verſe 8. it is ſaid, "After many days "thou ſhalt be viſited: in the latter years thou ſhalt "come into the land that is brought back from the "ſword." Verſe 16. "It ſhall be in the latter "days;" and verſe 17. "Thus ſaith the Lord, Art "thou he of whom I have ſpoken in old time by my "ſervants the prophets." This laſt phraſe is very much to our purpoſe, as it is ſeldom or ever uſed in Scripture, but to denote ſomething very ancient, or remote from the preſent time: So the Pſalmiſt, "Of

"old

" old thou haſt laid the foundations of the earth," Pſalm cii. 25. and Micah, v. 2. " Whoſe goings forth " were from of old, from everlaſting." What is ſaid in the 8th verſe, is ſtill ſtronger: " Thou ſhalt come " into the land that is brought back from the ſword, " againſt the mountains of Iſrael, which have been " always waſte." But it could not be ſaid in the days of Antiochus Epiphanes, nor indeed at any time prior to the taking of Jeruſalem by Titus Veſpaſian, that the mountains of Iſrael had been always waſte; for the firſt captivity laſted but forty, or at the utmoſt but ſeventy years. But it may be truly ſaid of them now; for ſince the days of Titus Veſpaſian, or rather of Adrian, to this preſent time, which is upwards of ſeventeen hundred years, it has been little better than a deſart, in compariſon of what it once was. But what puts it out of all doubt that this prophecy is not to be underſtood of Antiochus, or of any event that is yet paſt, is, that the deſtruction of the enemy here ſpoken of, and the deliverance of the church by means thereof, is aſcribed to the immediate hand and power of God, or to a miracle, and that too of the moſt extraordinary kind, chap. xxxviii. 22. " And " I will plead againſt him with peſtilence and with " blood; and I will rain upon him, and upon the " many people that are with him, an overflowing " rain, and great hailſtones, fire and brimſtone: " thus will I magnify myſelf, and ſanctify myſelf; " and I will be known in the eyes of many nations, " and they ſhall know that I am the Lord." But ſince the days of Ezekiel to this preſent time, no ſuch miraculous deſtruction has happened to any of the

the enemies of the Jews. From what has been ſaid, I think we may, with certainty, conclude that this prophecy refers to an event that is ſtill future, and which is not to happen till after the Jews are converted, and again ſettled in the land of Canaan; that they are then to be invaded by ſome great and powerful enemy, whom God will deſtroy by a miraculous exertion of his almighty power, like that which we read of, Joſhua x. 11. All this, I ſay, is clear from the prophecy itſelf, and from what we have ſaid upon it; but who this great enemy may be, is not ſo certain. It is, however, probable from ſeveral particulars here mentioned by the Prophet concerning him, as well as from the preſent ſtate of things in the political world, that the opinion commonly received is true, viz. that Gog is the Great Turk. For, 1ſt, he it is who is at preſent in poſſeſſion of the holy land, and who has had it for ſeveral hundreds of years bygone; and ſhould the Jews, by ſtealing a march upon him, or by any favourable concurrence of events in the courſe of Providence, get poſſeſſion of that country, it is natural to think that he will exert his utmoſt force to conquer or diſpoſſeſs them; and, to effect this, will collect ſuch an army as is here deſcribed by the Prophet. 2dly, The Turks came originally out of Scythia, or the ſouth of Tartary; and the Scythians, according to Bochart and divers learned men, are deſcended from Magog, the ſecond ſon of Japhet. See Mede on the ixth chapter of the Revelation, and 14th verſe. He is alſo ſtyled chief Prince of Meſech and Tubal; that is, Cappadocia and Armenia, according to Mede, who gives the following

following reaſon for this opinion: The Cappadocians were anciently called Moſchi, and their chief town Mazaca. The mountains called Moſchi were alſo in that country; which names makes it probable that the inhabitants were derived from Meſech. The Further Armenia is at this day called Turcomania, where was formerly the city of Thelbalana, which is not unlike Thubal or Tubal; but theſe countries are at preſent ſubject to the Turk, and therefore he muſt be Gog. 3dly, This army of Gog is deſcribed as conſiſting chiefly of horſemen, chap. xxxviii. verſes 14. and 15.; a deſcription that agrees exactly to the Turk, whoſe armies abound ſo much in cavalry, that a horſe's tail is carried before the General and principal officers as an enſign expreſſive of their military exploits, and ſhewing where their main ſtrength lies. This alſo is the very character by which the army of the four angels, in the ixth of the Revelation, are deſigned; which paſſage all commentators agree in applying to the Turks. In both places they are repreſented as innumerable; another circumſtance that points out the meaning, and ſerves to ſhew that the ſame nation or people is intended in both. 4thly, That the Turk is Gog, will appear further evident, if we conſider the character and ſituation of the nations that are here repreſented as joining with him. Theſe are at preſent all Mahometans, which makes it probable that he himſelf is alſo of that religion. But it cannot be the Perſians, for they are here mentioned as his allies or aſſiſtants; nor the Great Mogul, who is alſo Mahometan and of Scythian extract; for his dominions lie to the eaſt, or rather ſouth eaſt of Judea;

whereas

whereas Gog is said to come from his place, out of the north parts. It cannot be the Arabians, for they lie directly south, and are probably the Cushites, or Ethiopians, here mentioned among the allies of Gog; for according to the best historians and geographers, the posterity of Cush were the first that took possession of Arabia, and do at present occupy the greater part of that extensive country; and therefore, by the Ethiopians in this place, we are not to understand the inhabitants of the African Ethiopia, or Abyssinia, as it is called, but the Arabians, or Asiatic posterity of Cush, who are all Mahometans, and very likely to join with Gog against the Jews, as they are here said to do; but for this reason, as well as for that mentioned above, they cannot be Gog himself. Neither can it be any of the Mahometan nations inhabiting the north of Africa, for they lie to the S. W. of Judea, and are also mentioned among the allies of Gog, under the name of Lybians. Thus it appears, that the description which the prophet here gives of Gog, agrees to none of these nations, and besides these there is no other nation or power that professes the Mahometan religion at present in the world but the Turk: He therefore must of necessity be the person intended by Gog. And as a farther proof of this, we may observe, that the Lybians, or States of Barbary, who are here mentioned among the allies of Gog, are intimately connected with the Turk. They are not only of the same religion with him as the Persians and Cushites, or Arabians also are; but their forms of government and laws are the same. They were once subject to the Turk, and though now independ-

ent, their armies ſtill conſiſt chiefly of Turkiſh ſoldiers, and ſome of them pay a ſort of homage and tribute to him: Who therefore is ſo likely in a time of need to ſolicit their aid, or to obtain it, as He? Another remarkable circumſtance in this prophecy, which proves that the Turk is Gog, is that the iſles are mentioned as ſubject to him, and ſaid to ſuffer with him; for immediately after deſcribing his fall in the 4th and 5th verſes of the 39th chapter, it is added, "And I will "ſend a fire upon Magog, and on them that dwell "careleſsly in the iſles." By the iſles in Scripture, is commonly meant thoſe of the Mediterranean, as they lie neareſt to Judea, and were thoſe with which the ſacred writers were beſt acquainted; but theſe are almoſt all ſubject to the Turk; beſides, he poſſeſſes all the countries of Greece and Leſſer Aſia, which being of an inſular nature, are in Scripture ſometimes called iſlands, as Geneſis x. and 5th. By theſe were the iſles of the Gentiles divided in their families, where, by the iſles, all interpreters underſtand the Mediterranean iſlands, together with the two great peninſulas of Greece and Leſſer Aſia. Farther, that by the iſles, in this place, we are to underſtand thoſe of the Mediterranean, is evident, becauſe they are repreſented as ſubject to Gog, and Gog is ſaid, chap. xxxviii. 15. to come out of the north parts; but there is no power to the north of Judea, that has ſo many fine iſlands ſubject to him as the Turk: and as this proves that he is Gog, ſo it proves alſo that the iſles of the Mediterranean, which are ſubject to him, muſt be the iſles here meant. "And I will ſend a fire upon Ma-„ gog, and on them that dwell careleſsly in the iſles."

By

By Magog in this place, we are moſt probably to underſtand Leſſer Aſia; not only becauſe it is here joined with the iſles, as it is naturally connected with them, moſt of them being ſituated near its coaſt; but alſo becauſe it is here that the famous Gyges or Gog, the grandfather of Croeſus, formerly reigned. It was long the chief reſidence of the Turk before he croſſed the Helleſpont and conquered Greece; and it may be ſaid to be his reſidence ſtill, as it continues ſubject to him, and Conſtantinople, where his reſidence is, is ſeparated from it only by a narrow frith; and for this reaſon, he may very properly be called Gog, as being his ſucceſſor, and reigning over the ſame countries over which Gog formerly reigned, and them that dwell careleſsly in the iſles. The inhabitants of the Mediterranean iſles may be ſaid to dwell careleſsly, becauſe their inſular ſituation is a ſort of defence to them, and being under the protection of the Turk (to whom they belong), and who is one of the moſt formidable powers in the known world, they have long enjoyed the bleſſing of peace. They may be ſaid to live careleſsly alſo, becauſe theſe iſlands are of ſo happy a climate, and ſo exceeding fruitful, that the inhabitants do not need ſo much to toil either for food or raiment as other men. Indeed, it may be ſaid of the Turks in general, that they dwell careleſsly. They are a thoughtleſs indolent people, who mind nothing but their pleaſures. For theſe reaſons, we imagine that the iſlands here mentioned, can be no other than the Grecian Archipelago, including the great peninſula of Greece itſelf, and other iſlands of the Mediterranean, which, as they are ſubject to the

Turk

Turk, are moſt likely to ſuffer with him, as they are here ſaid to do; and if by Magog we underſtand Leſſer Aſia, as I have ſhewn you we ought to do, we will have here the principal part, the main ſtrength and body of the Turkiſh empire. What is meant by ſending a fire upon theſe places cannot (we imagine) be particularly or with certainty known till the prophecy is fulfilled. Perhaps it is intended to ſignify the diſtreſs and terror that will ſeize the inhabitants when they ſhall hear from Judea of the dreadful overthrow of Gog, and of their friends and relations that have periſhed with him; or it may ſignify ſome great calamity that is immediately to ſucceed the former, and perhaps to touch them ſtill more nearly. "And "I will ſend a fire upon Magog, and on them that "dwell carelefsly in the iſles." Thus we have taken a view of all the nations that are here mentioned as ſubject to Gog, or joining with him, except the two laſt, viz. Gomer, and the houſe of Togarmah. Who theſe are, is not ſo eaſy to determine, nor is it very material, as the general meaning and intent of the prophecy can be aſcertained without it. The moſt probable opinion is, that they are ſome of the nations of Europe, who, from covetouſneſs or ſuch like motives, will at that time join with the Turk in his expedition againſt the Jews. Gomer (it is generally thought) was the father of moſt of the nations that firſt ſettled in Europe, ſuch as the Celtae and Teutones. See the Univerſal Hiſtory. Pool thinks that by Gomer, we are to underſtand the inhabitants of Galatia, Phrygia, Bythinia, and by the houſe of Togarmah, thoſe of Paphlagonia and Cappadocia, all countries

tries of Leſſer Aſia: And it is true that ſome of the poſterity of Gomer did at firſt ſettle in theſe parts; but it is alſo true, that others of them paſſed over into Europe, either by the Helleſpont or elſewhere; for that ſeveral of the nations of Europe are deſcended from that Patriarch, has been ſufficiently proved by the authors above mentioned and others. I ſay therefore, it is probable, that ſome of the European nations are here meant; but which of them it is, time only can diſcover: For there is no great connection betwixt the Turk and any of theſe nations at preſent. Some of them indeed have made treaties of peace and commerce with him, and ſome of them do too much reſemble him in their antichriſtian principles and temper; but that is all: There is at leaſt no ſuch connection betwixt him and any of them as there is betwixt him and the nations above mentioned. Leaving therefore Gomer and the houſe of Togarmah out of the account, as we are ſtill in a great meaſure uncertain what nations are meant by theſe names, we have here a great many beſides whoſe ſituation and character are pretty well known, and have been aſcertained, viz. the Perſians, the Cuſhites or Arabians, the Lybians or nations of Barbary, Magog or Leſſer Aſia, the inhabitants of Greece and of the Mediterranean iſles; and theſe, as we have ſhewn, are all connected by their religion, and ſome of them alſo by other ties, which makes what is here foretold of their future combination againſt the Jews the more probable.

And here we cannot help obſerving, that the connection which at preſent ſubſiſts betwixt theſe powers affords

affords no contemptible argument in favour of Divine Revelation. For here it is plainly intimated, that in ſome future period there would be a connection betwixt theſe powers; for a combination without a connection, without ſome principle or motive to induce men to combine or unite, never was or can be; and who, without the ſpirit of prophecy, could at ſuch a diſtance of time, foreſee that ever there was to be any connection betwixt the powers here mentioned. There was no connection betwixt them in the prophet's time, nor the ſmalleſt likelihood that ever there would be any, much leſs ſuch a connection as would induce them all to join together in a war againſt the people of God. The Perſians, the people at Conſtantinople or in Leſſer Aſia; the inhabitants of Algiers, Morocco, and Tunis, were in thoſe days too unlike in their manners, and lay at too great a diſtance from one another, to give the ſmalleſt ground for thinking that ever there would be any connection betwixt them. The bond of connection which at preſent ſubſiſts between theſe nations, is therefore in part a fulfilling of this prophecy of Ezekiel's a proof of its divine inſpiration, and a ſure pledge of the full accompliſhment thereof in due ſeaſon.

That the Jews will one day be converted and ſettled again in their native country, has been already proved by a variety of arguments, and will appear ſtill more probable from what we have farther to add upon this ſubject: That the Turk, if his power and government continue ſo long, will not be an idle ſpectator of the revolution, will not tamely ſuffer them both to get and keep poſſeſſion, is natural to think.

Judea

Judea is one of the fineſt provinces of his empire, and it is not to be expected that he will eaſily give it up, but rather that he will ſtir up all his ſtrength and might to oppoſe them, either to hinder their getting poſſeſſion at firſt, or afterwards to wreſt it from them: and the religious connections that at preſent ſubſiſt betwixt him and the nations before mentioned, make it exceeding probable that they will join with him; for not to ſpeak of their regard for the Turk, which I believe with many of them is not great, yet concern for the honour and ſafety of the Mahometan religion, of which the Turk is one of the principal ſupports, and fear leſt the growing intereſts of Chriſtianity ſhould prove fatal to it; their hatred of the Jews, envy at their proſperity, and the hope of enriching themſelves by their ſpoils, are all motives that muſt have great weight with them to make them join with the Turk on this occaſion. Thus all things conſpire to augment the probability of the events predicted in this prophecy. And as the future converſion and reſtoration of the Jews is the principal and leading event on which all the other events here mentioned depend, and of which they ſeem to be the natural conſequence, ſo the probability of theſe other events adds to that of their future converſion and reſtoration.

Another of thoſe paſſages where the reſtoration of the Jews is expreſsly foretold, is Hoſea iii. 4. "For "the children of Iſrael ſhall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a "ſacrifice. Afterward ſhall the children of Iſrael "return and ſeek the Lord their God, and David "their king, and ſhall fear the Lord and his goodneſs

"in

" in the latter days." To which the words of Ezekiel exactly agree, " And I will ſet up one Shepherd, and " he ſhall feed them; even my ſervant David; he " ſhall feed them, and he ſhall be their ſhepherd. " And I the Lord will be their God, and my ſervant " David a prince among them." Theſe paſſages cannot be underſtood of David himſelf, who was dead long before they were written, nor yet of the ordinary poſterity of David; for, excepting Zerubbabel, none of that family ever reigned over the Jews after the captivity, much leſs over the whole houſe of Iſrael. It muſt therefore be underſtood of Meſſiah, the ſon of David. And what confirms this interpretation is, that it is ſaid this ſhould be in the latter days. Read alſo the ixth chap. of Amos, from the 9th ver. to the end, and the prophecy of Obadiah, from the 17th verſe to the end. To which we may add the words of our Saviour, Luke xxi. 24. " And Jeruſalem ſhall " be trodden down of the Gentiles until the times of " the Gentiles be fulfilled;" which evidently implies, that when the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled, Jeruſalem ſhall no longer be trodden down, but be rebuilt and inhabited again by her own people. By the times of the Gentiles we are moſt probably to underſtand the time, times and a half, or the 1260 years of the reign of the Beaſt, ſo often ſpoken of in Daniel and the Revelation. If this conjecture is well founded, the reſtoration of the Jews will fall in with the deſtruction of ſpiritual Babylon, as ſeems to be elſewhere intimated.

Another proof of the future reſtoration of the Jews, is their preſent wandering and unſettled ſtate. That

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in all the countries where they are, they ſhould, generally ſpeaking, have no property, either in houſes or lands, no heretable poſſeſſion, or ſhare in the government, or any thing to detain them from returning to their native country, in caſe an opportunity ſhould happen, looks as if Providence intended one day to turn back their captivity, and to put them in poſſeſſion of their ancient inheritance. The many diſappointments which that people have met with in attempting to obtain a ſettlement, or the privileges of citizens in different countries, may indeed be looked upon as a puniſhment, and part of the curſe that lies upon them for their ſin in crucifying the Saviour, and continuing ſo long to reject his Goſpel, and no doubt ſo it is: but when we conſider the kindneſs of Providence to them in other reſpects, his preſerving, ſupporting, and even multiplying them, notwithſtanding the numberleſs maſſacres and perſecutions they have ſuſtained, ~~and eſpecially his granting them a temporal bleſſing, making them to flow in riches, and worldly wealth~~; I ſay, when we conconſider theſe things, we cannot help thinking that Providence, in diſappointing them of a ſettlement, has ſome other end in view, beſides puniſhing them for their infidelity; for if this were his only end, why not puniſh them in their worldly circumſtances, why not diſappoint them in the purſuit of riches, as well as in their attempts to obtain a ſettlement? This would render his diſpleaſure againſt them for their infidelity ſtill more evident; but the deſigns of Providence muſt not thwart one another; and if it is decreed that the Jews ſhall one day return to their

native country and be ſettled there, they muſt have the means of doing this. If we deny the reſtoration of the Jews, we will find it hard to account for their worldly proſperity. It cannot be owing to their virtue or goodneſs, for they are a wicked people and viſibly under a curſe; every where exiles, hated and perſecuted, having a deſire to return to their native country, or to obtain a ſettlement ſome where elſe, but unable to accompliſh either the one or the other. But if we admit of their future reſtoration, then the reaſon not only of their worldly proſperity, but of all the other diſpenſations of Providence towards them is moſt apparent. He denies them a ſettlement in the countries where they are, to prevent their having any attachment to them, and that they may be under no temptation to ſtay ſtill, or look back whenſoever they are called, in the courſe of Providence, to remove; and for this reaſon, alſo, he ſuffers them to be hated and perſecuted, namely, that they may be the more willing to quit the places where they are ſo uſed; and laſtly, he endues them with riches, that they may have wherewith to ſupport themſelves on their journey to their native country, and to eſtabliſh themſelves therein: for as many of them live at a great diſtance from Paleſtine, to travel ſo far, and to erect a ſettlement to themſelves, in a country almoſt deſolate, is a thing not to be done without conſiderable wealth, and their being endued with ſuch wealth, as it renders their return poſſible, ſo it adds to the probability of it. Thus both the kindneſs and ſeverity of Providence towards this people, ſerve to

confirm the doctrine I have been endeavouring to prove, viz. their future converſion and reſtoration.

And as the Jews are in a ſtate that fits them for returning to their native country, ſo their native country is in a ſtate that fits it for receiving them; in other words, as they are prepared for it, ſo it is prepared for them, being in a great meaſure deſolate, or ſo thinly peopled, that there is no ground to fear any oppoſition the inhabitants are able to give them, ſuppoſe they were inclined to give them any; but there is no reaſon to believe the inhabitants of Paleſtine will be diſpoſed to make any oppoſition to the return of the Jews. They are many of them Chriſtians, and who for that reaſon, one would think, would rather rejoice to ſee the fulfilment of Scripture prophecy in the converſion and reſtoration of God's ancient people; and though there are a great many Mahometans among them alſo, yet, if we may credit the accounts of modern travellers, they are all weary of the Turkiſh yoke. Beſides, there is ground, from Scripture, to believe that ſome, at leaſt, of the preſent inhabitants of Paleſtine will be aſſiſting to the Jews in their endeavours to recover the poſſeſſion of it. It is ſaid, Iſaiah xi. 14. "They ſhall fly on the "ſhoulders of the Philiſtines." And it is remarkable that the Druiſes, who inhabit the ſea coaſt and Mount Lebanon, are thought by ſome hiſtorians to be the deſcendants of the ancient Philiſtines; but ſuppoſing they are not, yet inhabiting the ſame country, and having no doubt a remnant of the old inhabitants among them, they may very properly be called by the ſame name. They are alſo the moſt civilized and independent

dependent tribe; and therefore it is probable, they may be among the firſt to throw off the Turkiſh yoke and to aſſiſt the Jews.

What has been ſaid of the converſion of the Jews, is true alſo of their reſtoration, or return to their native country, viz. that the poſſibility of the thing infers the probability of it. This, I confeſs, is not always a good argument; there are many things poſſible which are by no means probable; but in this inſtance the argument is good. That in a courſe of ſo many ages, as have elapſed ſince the diſperſion of the Jews, nothing ſhould have happened to render their reſtoration utterly impoſſible, or to fruſtrate the promiſes of Scripture concerning it, adds much to the probability of it. That notwithſtanding the many dreadful perſecutions they have ſuſtained, their various emigrations from one country to another, they have neither been totally deſtroyed or extirpated from the face of the earth, nor loſt and confounded with the reſt of mankind, as has happened to other conquered nations, nor yet been able to obtain a ſettlement in any of the countries where they have ſojourned; all of which would have prevented the accompliſhment of the prophecies concerning their reſtoration, looks as if Providence intended one day to turn back their captivity, and to put them once more in poſſeſſion of their native country. The great obſtacle to the reſtoration of the Jews, or their return to the land of Canaan, is, that it is at preſent in the hands of the Turks, a great and powerful nation, and who, ſuppoſing the Jews were converted, and attempting to get poſſeſſion of it, would no doubt oppoſe them with all their

their might. Thus, as the idolatry of the weſtern Antichriſt is the grand obſtacle to the converſion of the Jews, ſo the power and policy of the eaſtern Antichriſt is the main hinderance to their reſtoration. But the Turk is now no more that formidable enemy he was ſome centuries ago. He has been ſeveral times humbled of late, and had it not been for the aſſiſtance of ſome people, would in all probability have been humbled much more. His power, like that of the Pope, is daily falling, (ſee Volney's Travels); and it is to be hoped that this obſtacle to the reſtoration of the Jews will ſoon be removed. The Turks are a vile indolent people. They occupy the fineſt countries in the known world without beſtowing due culture on them, Egypt, Chaldea, Paleſtine, and in a word all the countries ſo much famed in Scripture and ancient hiſtory are in their poſſeſſion: but in what ſtate are they? In many places little better than a wilderneſs, and do not maintain the tenth part of the people they did in ancient times, and all this through the corruption and oppreſſion of the Turkiſh government. The poor Chriſtians are in a particular manner oppreſſed and perſecuted under it; and therefore it is to be hoped that the Divine Being, as he cannot be indifferent to the intereſts of his creatures, will, ere long, interpoſe for their deliverance, and deſtroy them who deſtroy the earth, Rev. ii. 18. Not that I look upon the total downfal of the Ottoman empire as an event that is ſoon to happen, or as a thing neceſſary to the reſtoration of the Jews, for Scripture in ſeveral places ſeems plainly to intimate the contrary, viz. that there will be a remnant of the Antichriſtian powers till

till the Millennium. Ezek. xxxviii. and xxxix. chapters, and Daniel xi. chapter towards the end, compared with the beginning of the xii. chapter and 2d Theſſalonians 2d chapter and 8th verſe. It is enough if the Ottomans are ſo far humbled and weakened as not to be able to hinder the return of the Jews, whenſoever the time appointed for it ſhall come, and they may very ſoon be ſo far humbled, and afterwards get up again, ſo as to be able to make that invaſion upon the Jews, which we read of Ezekiel xxxviii, and xxxix. chapters. Many things may happen to open up a door for the return of the Jews beſides the total overthrow of the Ottoman empire. Any great revolution, ſuch as the revolt of any of the principal provinces, under ſome able leader like Ali Bey, who, to encourage the Jews to join with him, ſhould make them an offer of the Holy Land; or ſhould the Jews themſelves rebel, and get ſome ally to aſſiſt them, or ſhould their converſion happen at a time when the Turk was deeply engaged, either with ſome dangerons inſurrection at home, or at war with ſome powerful neighbour; in any of theſe caſes the prophecies concerning the reſtoration of the Jews might very ſoon be fulfilled. But ſuppoſe we could not ſee how it was poſſible for the Jews to get poſſeſſion of the land of Canaan, it would not follow that the thing is in itſelf either impoſſible or improbable; God ſees many things which we cannot ſee, and can accompliſh his deſigns by a thouſand means which we can neither foreſee nor imagine. So long as the land of Judea remains, and the Jews continue to be a people, it is certainly in the power of God to give them

them poſſeſſion of it; and as he has promiſed to do it, were it impoſſible that it could be effected by ordinary means, rather than that his word ſhould fail, we need not doubt but he would accompliſh it by a miracle.

HAVING ſhewn what ground there is, in Scripture and reaſon, to believe in the future converſion and reſtoration of the Jews, we ſhall now enquire what reaſon there is to hope that this bleſſed event is near. And, in the firſt place, one reaſon we have to hope ſo, is, the great diſcoveries that have of late been made with reſpect to the meaning of the prophecies which relate to this event, and the light that has been thrown on the Scriptures in general, whereby many difficulties and objections, that were not a little ſtumbling, have been cleared up, and the truth of the Chriſtian religion more fully demonſtrated than ever it was ſince the days of the apoſtles: And as the evidences of Chriſtianity ſeem daily to be gathering ſtrength, through the labours of pious and learned men, and new diſcoveries daily making in the meaning of Scripture; it is to be hoped that, ere long, the light of Divine truth will attain ſuch a ſplendour, as may, through the bleſſing of God, ſerve to diſpel the prejudices of that obſtinate people. I know ſome people deny theſe diſcoveries, and take them all for fancies and conjectures: but it is no diſparagement to ſcience, that the diſcoveries it makes are diſbelieved or deſpiſed by the ignorant. Thoſe who have read with care any of the learned authors that have lately treated on the prophecies, will not, I am confident, look on their interpretations as fancies; and as

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for thoſe who have neither ſtudied nor read upon this ſubject, they are incompetent judges.* It is ſaid, Daniel, chapter xii. and 9. the words are ſealed till the time of the end. From which, and from other reaſons that may be ſeen in Bicheno, on The ſigns of the times, many have inferred, that as the time when the prophecies are to be fulfilled draws near, the vail that covers them will be gradually taken off, or they will become clearer and clearer; and that ſo many learned men have of late been ſtirred up to ſtudy the prophecies, and enabled to throw ſo much light upon them, to explain them with ſo much clearneſs and preciſion, is, in my opinion, a proof, it affords at leaſt a probability, that the time of their accompliſhment is faſt approaching.

Another reaſon for thinking that the converſion of the Jews is at hand, is the terrible height to which vice and infidelity is of late arrived. This as it requires an extraordinary remedy, ſo it ſeems to indicate the approach of ſome great revolution that may help to awaken and convince men of the truth of religion, ſuch as the converſion of the Jews, or the fall of Antichriſt would do. Probably both theſe events are near, and coming as an aid to religion in her preſent time of need. And though God has many remedies, both ordinary and extraordinary, for the evils which he ſuffers to take place in the world; yet, that the times ſtand in need of ſuch a remedy, renders it at leaſt

* The authors here referred to, are chiefly Biſhop Newton on the Prophecies, the works of Mr Joſeph Mede, and Lowth on Iſaiah; M'Knight too has wrote well on this ſubject, particularly on the prophetic pſalms. See his truth of the Goſpel.

leaſt probable that ſome ſuch event is at hand. The Apoſtle tells us, that the converſion of the Jews will be like life from the dead; which ſeems to imply, that at the time when this event ſhall take place, the church of Chriſt will be in a dead ſtate; and that it is ſo at preſent, hardly needs to be proved. Beſides the general corruption of manners, and the prevalence of vice among all ranks, a ſpirit of atheiſm and infidelity is gone abroad into the world. In France, Voltaire and Buffon, and in Britain, David Hume, Lord Kames, and Gibbon, have done their utmoſt to raze the foundation of Chriſtianity: And though their arguments ſignify nothing at bottom, yet they are ſo ſubtile and ſpecious, that it requires more patience and a greater meaſure of learning to confute them, than the moſt part of people are poſſeſſed of; hence it is, that multitudes have been miſled and perverted by them. Our great proſperity, and the increaſe of our worldly wealth, owing chiefly to the extenſion of our commerce, and our conqueſts in the Eaſt and Weſt Indies, has alſo helped very much to corrupt us; for the natural tendency of proſperity is to corrupt men's morals, and bad morals, or a bad practice, naturally leads to bad principles: but whatever be the cauſe, that we are of late, namely, within theſe thirty or forty years, much fallen off from the zeal and ſpirit of our forefathers, in religious matters, is a fact too evident to admit of any diſpute, and will be denied by none, but ſuch as love to queſtion the moſt palpable truths. I will not venture to affirm, that we are quite as bad as in the times of Popery and Paganiſm; but certain it is, that ſince the eſtabliſh-

ment of the reformed religion, this kingdom never abounded with ſo many open and avowed enemies to Chriſtianity. Never was infidelity, contempt of religious ordinances, libertiniſm, luxury, and oppreſſion ſo prevalent. Never was there ſo many diviſions in the church, greater heat about circumſtantials, and leſs regard paid to real and vital religion. Never was the Sabbath ſo openly prophaned, nor religious converſation ſo much out of faſhion; nay, ſuch is the degeneracy of the times, that the moſt oppoſite and contrary vices have combined to make up our character: we are at the ſame time covetous and voluptuous, ſelfiſh and profuſe, full of compliment and civility, and void of real friendſhip; and, ſo far as I can underſtand, things are much in the ſame ſtate on the continent, or rather in a worſe; at leaſt this is the caſe in France, where the rulers and repreſentatives of the nation have openly avowed their diſbelief of the Goſpel of Chriſt, changed the laws and broken the everlaſting covenant; ſo that there is a general off-falling in all parts of Chriſtendom, and among all ſects and denominations. Iniquity abounds, and becauſe of this, the love of many is waxen cold. This general decay of piety, and increaſe of vice and irreligion, as it ſeems to require the interpoſition and ſpecial aid of Providence to remedy it, ſo we need not doubt but he will, in his own good time and way, interpoſe or grant that aid. He has promiſed, that the name of Chriſt ſhall endure for ever, and that the gates of hell ſhall not prevail againſt his church; and therefore, however general or deep the apoſtacy may be, we need not fear, leſt

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the religion or people of Chriſt ſhould be rooted out: when the enemy cometh in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord ſhall lift up a ſtandard againſt him.

As the times of the church's greateſt proſperity on earth have always been preceded by a time of darkneſs and trouble; ſo it is to be hoped, that the preſent night of war, vice, and irreligion, that overſpreads Europe, is only the forerunner of a bright and glorious day, wherein righteouſneſs, peace, and truth ſhall prevail. When it ſhall pleaſe God, by ſome ſignal manifeſtation of his power and Providence, to ſtop the preſent growth and progreſs of vice and infidelity, we know not, becauſe we cannot know how long God will bear with the wickedneſs of men, nor when the diſeaſe is come to a proper criſis; but as infidelity and contempt of religion are already come to a prodigious height, and every day increaſing, there is the greateſt reaſon to think that the time is not very diſtant. It is time for thee to work, for they have made void thy law. As to the nature of the remedy that God deſigns to apply, what or of what kind it ſhall be, becomes us to enquire with the greateſt modeſty, and cannot be known with certainty till time diſcover it; but ſo far as we can judge, there is no remedy ſo likely to produce the deſired effect, no revolution or event ſo well calculated to ſtop the mouths of infidels, and to ſtrengthen the faith of God's people, as that which we have already mentioned, viz. the converſion of the Jews. For as this event, with many of its circumſtances and concomitant events, is moſt clearly and diſtinctly foretold in Scripture, and in a great

great variety of places; and as it is an event which no human wit or ſagacity could foreſee, eſpecially at a time ſo diſtant as that wherein the prophets who have foretold it lived, it muſt, whenſoever it ſhall pleaſe God that it happen, afford men the moſt ample and ſatisfactory proof of the Divine inſpiration of the Scriptures, and of the truth of the Goſpel. But this is not all: the converſion of the Jews would demonſtrate the truth of Chriſtianity, not only as it would be a moſt remarkable fulfilment of Scripture prophecy, but alſo, were it to happen at ſuch a time as this, it might well be conſidered as a declaration of Providence in its favour. The ingathering of ſo great and mighty a people into the church of Chriſt, at a time when his religion is attacked by ſo many great and powerful enemies, and when there is ſuch an off-falling among all ranks, eſpecially when a whole nation has apoſtatized from the faith, might well be looked on as a proof of God's ſpecial regard for this religion, and that, in ſpite of all oppoſition, he will ſupport it; and whether the Jews be converted at this time or not, it will in all probability be at ſuch a time as this.

Another reaſon for thinking that the converſion of the Jews is at hand, is, that moſt of the obſtacles that have hitherto hindered it are now removed. The chief hinderances to the converſion of that people, are, 1ſt, Their carnal hopes of temporal greatneſs, by means of the Meſſiah; 2dly, Their prejudices againſt Chriſtianity on account of the croſs of Chriſt; 3dly, The prevalence of Popery or idolatry in the Chriſtian world. The firſt hinderance is, their carnal

nal hopes of temporal greatneſs, by means of the Meſſiah. The Jews are too ſenſible not to ſee, that ſomething like a temporal kingdom is promiſed them in Scripture. All the prophets ſpeak of their reſtoration in the latter days, of their being again put in poſſeſſion of their ancient inheritance, and conſtituting under Chriſt a glorious and happy church. Ezek. xxxvi. and xxxvii. chapters, and Hoſea ii. and iii. chapters, Iſaiah xlix. lx. and lxi. chapters; and when this ſhall happen, it is not to be doubted but they will make the firſt people on earth, as is evident from the paſſages juſt now quoted: Strangers ſhall ſtand and feed your flocks, and the ſons of the alien ſhall be your ploughmen and vine dreſſers; but ye ſhall be named the Prieſts of the Lord: men ſhall call you the miniſters of our God. So Micah iv. and 8. "And thou, O tower of the flock, the "ſtrong hold of the daughter of Zion, unto thee ſhall "it come, even the firſt dominion, the kingdom ſhall "come to the daughter of Jeruſalem."

Hence it is probable, that the Jews after their converſion and reſtoration will enjoy ſome kind of ſuperiority over the reſt of mankind. The nations perhaps will do them homage, as lately they did to Britain, or perhaps employ them as paſtors and miniſters of the Goſpel; as ſeems to be implied in that text, ye ſhall be named the prieſts of the Lord, men ſhall call you the miniſters of our God. At any rate, all good men will reverence and honour them, on account of their antiquity, their near relation to Chriſt, and the many ſpiritual bleſſings and advantages the world has enjoyed by their means. They will

will be a free, flouriſhing, and happy people, and in all probability make the greateſt figure of any on the face of the globe.* All which ſeems neceſſary to compenſate the ſtate of humiliation and contempt which they have ſo long endured. The weakneſs of Chriſtians in denying theſe things, has hitherto very much prejudiced the Jews againſt the religion of Chriſt; but now that our divines do generally admit of the reſtoration of the Jews, and have got into a way of explaining the prophecies that is more favourable to the hopes of that people, and at the ſame time perfectly conſiſtent with the truth of the Goſpel, this obſtacle

* Certain it is, there is no country in the world that enjoys ſo many advantages as Judea or the land of Paleſtine. It is in Scripture ſtyled "The glory of all lands, a land flowing with milk and "honey, a land of wheat and barley, of vines, figs, pomegranates, "and oil olive; whoſe ſtones are iron, and out of whoſe hills thou "mayeſt dig braſs." It is ſituate in the beſt of climates, and if it were ſtocked with inhabitants, and properly cultivated, there is no doubt but it would ſoon become as Ezekiel prophecies of it, "Like "the garden of Eden." There is one advantage peculiar to it, namely, it is the moſt centrical or proper place for navigation and commerce of any in the world. Being ſituate near the centre of the eaſtern continent, and bordering upon the Mediterranean and Red ſeas, its inhabitants have an eaſier acceſs than thoſe of any other country to all different parts of the globe. By ſailing down the Arabian gulf, they can go to any part of the Eaſt Indies, or of the eaſtern coaſt of Africa, in the third part of the time that they muſt take who ſail from any of the ports of Europe. And by being ſituate at the bottom of the Mediterranean, they have an eaſy acceſs to all its numerous coaſts and harbours, as well as to thoſe of the Euxine or Black ſea. It is true, Egypt enjoys theſe advantages alſo; but then it is farther from the centre of the continent, and conſequently not ſo fit for an inland trade.

ſtacle to their converſion ſeems now to be in a great meaſure removed.

Another hinderance to the converſion of the Jews, is their prejudices againſt the Chriſtian religion on account of the croſs of Chriſt. This the Apoſtle tells us was a ſtumbling block to the Jews in his days, and I believe it is ſo ſtill. The Goſpel, as they imagine, reflects the greateſt diſhonour upon their nation. It charges them with the greateſt of all crimes, viz. murdering the Son of God; and therefore it is no wonder than they are unwilling to confeſs it, or own its truth. But this need be no obſtacle to their converſion, did they but rightly conſider the matter, ſince they have juſt about as much honour by the Goſpel as diſhonour. It is true they crucified the Lord of glory, which is a reproach to them; but they have the honour of being his kinſmen according to the fleſh, of being the people from whom our Saviour and his apoſtles deſcended, and by whom the whole world has been enlightened, converted, and brought to the knowledge of ſalvation, to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the giving of the law, whoſe are the fathers, and of whom, as concerning the fleſh, Chriſt came, who is over all, God bleſſed for ever. We do ill to upbraid the Jews with our Saviour's crucifixion; we are all in ſome ſenſe guilty of it as well as they. It was our ſins that crucified the Lord of glory, the Jews were but the inſtruments; our ſin was the procuring cauſe of his crucifixion; and if they are more nearly related to his murderers, ſo are they alſo to Chriſt himſelf. The modern Jews

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are indeed the offspring of them that crucified the Saviour, but they themſelves had no actual hand in it, nor are they in any ſenſe more guilty of it than we, ſave only this, that by their unbelief and enmity to Chriſt, they ſhew that they allow the deeds of their fathers; and therefore would they but repent and acknowledge Chriſt, their reproach would ſoon be all wiped away.

Another hinderance to the converſion of the Jews, is the prevalence of Popery in the Chriſtian world. How this has operated to hinder the entrance of the Jews into the Chriſtian church, we have ſhown at great length in a former diſcourſe, and ſhall not repeat what was there ſaid, but only obſerve, that as Antichriſt has lately received a terrible blow by the revolution of France, and is every day falling, it is to be hoped this obſtacle to the converſion of the Jews will very ſoon be totally removed. Thus it appears, that moſt of the obſtacles that have hitherto hindered the converſion of the Jews are now in a great meaſure removed, which ſurely gives ground to think that the time to favour them is near.

That the converſion of the Jews is an event at no great diſtance, will appear farther probable from the following enquiry into the ends of Providence in excluding them ſo long from his church. Theſe ends I have been at great pains to inveſtigate, and ſo far as I have been able to diſcover them, it appears that moſt, if not all of them, are now in a great meaſure attained.

Enquiry

An Enquiry into the ends of Providence in excluding the Jews ſo long from the Church of Chriſt.

One of the ends of the Divine Being in enduing us with a principle of reaſon, was that we might be able thereby to ſearch into, and underſtand, although but in part, the nature of his manifold works, and to trace his glorious perfections as diſplayed in them. As reaſon is the nobleſt faculty in man, ſo this is the nobleſt uſe he can make of his reaſon. Such enquiries, beſides exerciſing and improving our faculties, afford much innocent pleaſure to the contemplative mind. They tend moreover to ſtrengthen our faith in the being and perfections of God, and to inſpire us with ſentiments of love and gratitude to him; for the more we ſearch into his works, the greater reaſon we ſhall ſee to admire his infinite wiſdom and goodneſs. This is true of all the works of creation, and it is no leſs ſo of all the works or diſpenſations of Providence, particularly that diſpenſation which has ſo long been, and is ſtill to be, the ſubject of our diſcourſe.

The obſtinacy of the Jews, in continuing ſo long to reject the offers of the Goſpel, and to reſiſt the clear evidence both of Scripture and reaſon, has been matter of grief to the godly in all ages, and even cauſed ſome to doubt whether they will ever be converted or not. But if the thing is in itſelf poſſible, and if wiſe and good reaſons can be given why it has been ſo long deferred, then all objections againſt it on account of the long continuance of their infidelity muſt ſignify nothing. That the thing is in itſelf poſſible, none who believe the almighty power of God can

doubt. However ſtrong the prejndices of that people are, certainly the Divine Being can overcome them, and either give them ſuch evidence as will be ſufficient to ſatisfy their doubts, or diſpoſe their minds to acquieſce in that degree of evidence which he has already given them, and which has been found ſufficient to ſatisfy other people. As for the reaſons why Providence has been pleaſed ſo long to exclude the Jews from the church of Chriſt, they are pretty obvious, and ſome of them have been already noticed in the two preceding diſcourſes upon this ſubject. As, firſt, That they might be a ſtanding evidence of the truth of the Scriptures. Had the Jews been converted at a much earlier period, for example, 1000 years ago, one of the ſtrongeſt arguments in favour of Chriſtianity, muſt by this time have loſt much of its force. I mean, that which is drawn from the prophecies of the Old Teſtament concerning our Saviour. The Scriptures in that caſe had been of a long time only in the hands of Chriſtians, and it might have been alledged by Infidels, that they had been in ſome former period corrupted to favour the cauſe of Chriſtianity; and we, who live at this diſtance of time, would not have been ſo able to demonſtrate the contrary: but ſince theſe Scriptures have been all along in the hands of the bittereſt enemies of the Chriſtian name, and the Old Teſtament that we have at preſent is the ſame, word for word, with that which is uſed by the Jews at this day, we have the ſtrongeſt proof that can be deſired, that it has not been corrupted with a view to favour the Chriſtian cauſe. For it is not to be ſuppoſed that the Jews would do this,

this, or, if the Chriſtians had done it, that the Jews would have ſubmitted to it, or admitted ſuch corruptions into their Bibles. If, therefore, the prophecies of the Old Teſtament that favour the cauſe of Chriſtianity were ever interpolated or foiſted into the text, it muſt have been before the coming of our Saviour; but neither can this ſuppoſition be admitted, for ſince theſe prophecies have all been exactly fulfilled in HIM, then we muſt acknowledge, that thoſe who thus corrupted the ſacred text were divinely inſpired, which is abſurd. The Scriptures of the Old Teſtament were in the hands of the Jews long before they came into thoſe of the Chriſtians; and therefore might have been corrupted by the former, but could never be by the latter; and conſequently every argument taken from the prophecies concerning the Meſſiah has a double force; becauſe they might once have been clearer or more favourable to the cauſe of Chriſtianity, but could never be leſs ſo. From all which it is evident, that the unbelief of the Jews was abſolutely neceſſary to aſſure us of the authenticity of the Scriptures, and is the very thing that confirms the Chriſtian's faith, and it is for this reaſon that they have been ſo long excluded from the church of Chriſt. But now that the Scriptures are diſperſed through moſt countries of the world, and tranſlated into almoſt all the different languages thereof,—now that learning is become ſo general, and the art of printing has been invented, by which means different editions of the Scriptures are in every body's hands, it muſt be utterly impoſſible that ever a general corruption, or even any material alteration ſhould happen

pen to the ſacred text; and therefore, though the Jews ſhould now be converted, poſterity will have no reaſon to doubt of the authenticity of the Holy Scriptures. This end of Providence in rejecting the Jews, ſeems therefore now to be anſwered.

Another reaſon why the Jews have been ſo long excluded from the church of Chriſt, is for a terror to the reſt of mankind, that it might ſerve to convince the world of the great ſin and danger of unbelief. For this end they were at firſt rejected, and for this end they have been ſo long excluded from the church. And conſidering the greatneſs of their offence, the infinite dignity and ſpotleſs innocence of that Divine perſon whom they betrayed and murdered, it was highly proper that Providence ſhould teſtify his diſpleaſure againſt them, not only by the greatneſs, but alſo by the length or continuance of their ſufferings: and though we cannot take upon us to ſay what preciſe time is moſt proper for anſwering that end, or how long the ſufferings of the Jews ſhould laſt, ſo as beſt to anſwer the end of Providence in puniſhing them, yet we cannot help thinking, that it is now in a great meaſure attained. They have now ſuffered for ſuch a length of time, as, taking the degree of their ſufferings into the account, leaves no room to doubt of the cauſe of them. Indeed, were their puniſhment to be in exact proportion to the greatneſs of their crime, we might for ever deſpair of their converſion. But as Providence does not puniſh but for wiſe ends, nor any longer than is neceſſary to attain theſe, ſo, when once all his ends in puniſhing the Jews are attained, we need not doubt but he will turn to them, and have mercy on them.

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Another of the ends that the Divine Being ſeems to have had in view in excluding the Jews ſo long from the church of Chriſt, is to evidence the reality of his Providence. or to ſhew that there is a Divine hand in the things that have befallen and that are yet to befall them, namely, their unbelief, their diſperſion, long captivity and ſufferings, and eſpecially their future converſion. That the Jews ſhould continue ſo long to reject the Goſpel, contrary to the cleareſt evidence both of Scripture and reaſon, contrary to their intereſt and worldly advantage, and in ſpite of every means that has been uſed or can be deviſed by Chriſtians to convince them, is truly wonderful, and not to be accounted for in a natural way; and the longer they perſevere in this their unbelief, the more wonderful it muſt appear. The ſame may be ſaid of their future converſion. The longer they have continued to reject the Goſpel, and to hold out againſt the means that have been uſed to convince them, the more ſurpriſing muſt their converſion be, and the more evidently it muſt appear to be the work of God. Had their converſion happened at a very early period it would have been leſs wonderful. It might have been looked on as an accidental or common thing, as the natural effect of reaſon, or of the means uſed by Chriſtians for their converſion. But ſhould it happen now, after ſo long a continuance in unbelief, and after ſo many fruitleſs attempts to convert them, it could be aſcribed to nothing but to the ſpecial Providence or to the power and ſpirit of God. The longer the diſeaſe has laſted, generally ſpeaking, the more deadly and deſperate it is, and the more it requires the

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aid of the Almighty phyſician to remove it. And, for this reaſon, God ſometimes defers his help, till other remedies have been tried in vain, or ſuffers the diſeaſe to go on and gather ſtrength, on purpoſe that the cure may more evidently appear to be his own.

Our modern infidels deny that there is any thing wonderful in the unbelief of the Jews. It is plainly ſay they owing to the want of evidence. The proofs of Chriſtianity are not ſufficiently clear to convince a rational enquirer. But is it not ſomewhat ſtrange, that the evidence which ſatisfies men of all other claſſes and denominations, cannot ſatisfy them; for certain it is, that men of all nations, tempers, characters, and deſcriptions, have believed the Goſpel, and been brought over from infidelity, or the profeſſion of a different religion, to that of Chriſtianity. The rich, as well as the poor, men of learning and of the brighteſt parts, as well as the ſimple and illiterate; nay, many great and powerful nations have been converted, and do at this day make profeſſion of the Chriſtian religion; but of the Jews, ſcarce above two or three real converts are made in a century. But it will be ſaid, there are many nations who do not believe the Goſpel as well as the Jews; why then ſhould we wonder at the unbelief of the one more than of the other? The anſwer is plain. The nations refered to, live without the pale of the church, and have never had the Goſpel fairly offered or repreſented to them. They know little or nothing of the Chriſtian religion, or of the evidences thereof: whereas, the Jews live in great numbers among Chriſtians, and thereby have daily acceſs to know the Goſpel,

Goſpel, and much pains alſo has been taken to convert them; and this is that which makes their unbelief wonderful: Beſides, it is a known fact, that one will convert a heathen, a ſavage, a Mahometan, and even a modern freethinker, ſooner than a Jew. Is it not ſtrange that any perſon, much more that a whole nation, who acknowledge the divine authority of the Old Teſtament, ſhould deny that of the New, which not only agrees with it in every article, but is the chief thing that verifies and proves it, and without which, the Old Teſtament were, as to a great part of it, nothing but a heap of ceremonies that have no meaning or intrinſic worth, or of prophecies that have never been, nor can be fulfilled. We may inſtance in the following paſſages, 1ſt, Haggai ii. and 6. "Yet "once, it is a little while, and I will ſhake the hea- "vens and the earth, and I will ſhake all nations, "and the deſire of all nations ſhall come." Now, if this prophecy was not fulfilled in the coming of our Saviour, and if the deſire of all nations be yet to come, it cannot be ſaid to be a little while to his coming, for it is already upwards of 2000 years ſince this prophecy was uttered. Again, it is ſaid, Malachy iii. and 1. "And the Lord whom ye ſeek, ſhall ſud- "denly come to his temple." But if this prophecy was not fulfilled in the coming of our Saviour, it has never been fulfilled yet, nor can be fulfilled now; the ſecond temple which is here ſpoken of, as is evident from the context, being long ſince deſtroyed. The ſame may be ſaid of that propheey of Jacob, Geneſis xlix. and 10. "The ſceptre ſhall not depart from "Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, till

"Shiloh

" Shiloh come." The ſceptre has long ſince departed from Judah; and therefore if Shiloh be not already come, he never will. So, in the lxxxix Pſal. 36 ver. " it ſaid of David, his ſeed ſhall endure for ever, and " his throne as the ſun before me." And again, Jer. xxxiii. and 17. " David ſhall never want a man to " ſit upon the throne of the houſe of Iſrael." Now, unleſs we ſuppoſe that there is one of the poſterity of David ſtill living and reigning over the church, viz. in the perſon of Chriſt, our Saviour, it is evident theſe promiſes have failed, and cannot now be fulfilled; for the poſterity of David, except Chriſt, have all long ſince been cut off, or blended with the other Jews. The ſame may be ſaid of what follows in the 18th verſe of the ſame chapter. " Neither ſhall the Prieſts, the Levites, want a man before me, to offer burnt-offerings, viz. that unleſs we underſtand theſe words figuratively of the Miniſters of the church under the New Teſtament. as well as of the Levites, properly ſo called, it is evident they have failed alſo; and that they are ſo to be underſtood, is farther evident from Iſaiah lxvi. and 21. where, ſpeaking of the Gentiles, he tells us, that God would alſo take of them for Prieſts and for Levites; and from that of Malachy i. and 11. " For from the riſing of the ſun, " till the going down of the ſame, my name ſhall be " great among the Gentiles, and in every place in- " cenſe and a pure offering ſhall be offered unto my " name." Theſe paſſages, and many more of the ſame kind muſt, be falſe, if the Goſpel is not true. To this the deiſt has a ready anſwer, viz. that he does not believe the Old Teſtament more than the New.

New. But the Jews can give no anſwer at all, at leaſt no reaſonable one. Therefore, I ſay, his unbelief is wonderful, that is, there is ſomething ſtrange, or ſupernatural in it. Is it not ſtrange, that neither the judgments which God has inflicted on them for their infidelity, ſuch as the deſtruction of their city and temple, their diſperſion and long captivity, the perſecutions they have almoſt in every age endured, their having been ſo often deluded and cheated, by impoſters and falſe Meſſiahs, and the repeated diſappointments they have met with in attempting to obtain a ſettlement, either in their own country or elſewhere: Is it not ſtrange, I ſay, that neither theſe judgments, theſe ſigns of God's diſpleaſure againſt them for their unbelief, nor the arguments uſed by learned men to convince them, nor any other motive whatever can prevail with them to become Chriſtians; not even a regard to their own intereſt, to which, in other caſes, they ſeem as ſenſible as any people in the world. But granting there is nothing ſtrange in all this, what will the deiſt ſay, when he ſees the Jews actually converted? Will he ſay of that too, that there is nothing wonderful in it? He cannot ſay ſo conſiſtently with his principles: For if there be not ſufficient evidence for the truth of Chriſtianity, as he alledges, it is not to be thought that ever a whole nation, much leſs, that a nation ſo tenacious of their religious opinions, and that has ſhewn ſo much enmity to the Chriſtian religion, will ever embrace it; and therefore, their converſion, if it ſhould happen, muſt be a wonder indeed. The Jews have given ſufficient proof, that they are not to be turned by the proſpect

of gain, or of any worldly advantage; and therefore, their converſion, if ever it happens, muſt be owing either to the force of reaſon, which ſuppoſes that there is ſufficient evidence for the truth of the Goſpel, or to the removal of their prejudices, which ſuppoſes, that their preſent unbelief is owing not to the want of evidence, but to the power of prejudice, or ſomething ſupernatural, or miraculous. To thoſe who believe the Goſpel, and who ſee its evidences in their proper light, the converſion of the Jews, abſtractly conſidered, would not be ſo wonderful as their preſent unbelief is, yet that, when it happens, will be wonderful.

If it is to be brought about by human endeavours, or by any means of man's deviſing, it may be deemed wonderful, that theſe means were never thought of, or tried before, (eſpecially when ſo many ways have been tried, and ſo many great men have laboured in this field;) or, if tried, how that which formerly had no effect ſhould then have ſo great a one, as to turn a whole nation. If it is to be affected by any great revolution in human affairs, ſuch as a general naturalization, or admiſſion of that people to the rights of citizens over all the different ſtates and kingdoms of Europe, an event by no means improbable at preſent, and which may perhaps have the effect to take off their prejudices againſt Chriſtianity, and induce them to examine its evidences with more impartiality than hitherto they have done, and ſo be a means of bringing them to an acknowledgement of the truth; ſtill it would be wonderful, that ſuch a revolution did not take place ſooner. and that in every age and country, there

there has always been hitherto ſome bar to the naturalization of the Jews. If the fall of the Papacy is to be the means of bringing in the Jews, as very likely it is in this caſe too, their converſion will be wonderful, as that is an event that might have happened long ago, and, all things conſidered, truly ſurpriſing that it did not. For Popery is a moſt abſurd religion, equally contrary to Scripture and common ſenſe, and it is truly ſurpriſing that people ſhould have ſo long ſuffered themſelves to be cheated out of their ſenſes, and their money too, by a parcel of raſcals. Beſides, Antichriſt has been often on the point of falling; Rome has been ſeveral times taken and plundered; Popes have been ſet up againſt Popes, and ſometimes two or three have reigned together; and, in a word, ſuch ſtrange revolutions has happened in the kingdom of the Beaſt, as makes it wonderful that his fall has not happened long ere now. Perhaps both theſe events, viz. the naturalization of the Jews, and the fall of Antichriſt, may happen at a time, and contribute to produce the above-mentioned effect. But whatever be the means of the converſion of the Jews, whether a miracle, properly ſo called, or ſome extraordinary revolution, ſuch as theſe juſt now mentioned; the thing itſelf will appear to be the work of God, excite the admiration of mankind, be a great means of convincing infidels, and ſtrengthening the faith of God's people; which ſuggeſts another probable reaſon why the converſion of the Jews has been ſo long deferred; namely, that when it happens, it may prove a more powerful aid to the cauſe of Chriſtianity, and afford a ſtronger proof of the truth thereof. The longer the Jews have reſiſt-

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ed the evidences of the Goſpel, the ſtronger muſt their prejudices be, and the ſtronger theſe are, the more it will ſhew the truth and reaſonableneſs of that religion, the evidences of which have prevailed, and forced their aſſent to it. Beſides, the longer they have reſiſted the evidences of Chriſtianity, and the greater enmity they have ſhewn againſt it, the leſs ground there will be to ſuſpect the ſincerity of their converſion. To change our religion, to confeſs that we and our fathers have been in an error, and that too of the groſſeſt kind; to give up opinions, which both they and we have held in the higheſt veneration, and to embrace thoſe of an oppoſite faction, with which we have long and fiercely contended, is a thing very mortifying, and to which men are naturally averſe. Hath a nation changed its Gods.—It ſeems a reflection on our judgment, and even on our honour; and therefore, it is not to be ſuppoſed that any reaſonable man, much leſs that a whole nation will do it, unleſs conſtrained to it by a ſenſe of duty or the force of truth. For theſe reaſons, the converſion of the Jews, whenſoever it ſhall pleaſe God that it happen, muſt be a great proof of the truth of the Goſpel, a means of ſtopping the mouths of infidels and of confirming the faith of all good Chriſtians, and more ſo, as it will be the accompliſhment of a great many prophecies, both of the Old and New Teſtament, wherein this event, with ſeveral of its circumſtances and concomitant events are clearly foretold. How will it redound to the honour of Chriſtianity, to ſee its bittereſt enemies conſtrained at laſt to acknowledge its truths; and how will it ſilence and confound our modern infidels

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and deiſts, to ſee a prophecy ſo plain, ſo often repeated in Scripture, and that is well known to have been publiſhed over a great part of the world above 1700 years ago, fulfilled literally, and in every article before their eyes.

Another reaſon why the converſion of the Jews has been ſo long deferred, is to increaſe the joy of God's people, on account of it whenſoever it ſhall pleaſe God that it happen. Providence often defers his bleſſings on purpoſe to enhance their worth, to make us ſenſible of our need of them before he beſtows them, and to excite us to thank fulneſs when he does beſtow them. Men are apt to think lightly of favours that are too eaſily obtained. They judge of things not according to their real worth, but according to the pains it coſts them to obtain them. Therefore, God ſometimes keeps back his favours, in order to whet our appetite, to excite us to fervency in praying for them, and make us more ſenſible of their worth, and of his goodneſs in beſtowing them. Thus, Abraham was long married before Iſaac, the promiſed ſeed, was born: The Iſraelites were long oppreſſed in Egypt, and made to travel forty years in the wilderneſs, before they got to the promiſed land: The world was near 4000 years old before Chriſt, the promiſed Saviour, came into it; and doubtleſs his coming was the more acceptable, and cauſed greater joy to the church, that it had been ſo long expected; and ſo doubtleſs it will be with reſpect to the converſion of the Jews. It cannot be but matter of great joy to all good people, to all that have any love to Chriſt, or concern for his intereſt, to ſee an event that is ſo much for his glory

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and the good, both ſpiritual and temporal, of mankind; an event that has been ſo long looked for, ſo long the ſubject of the church's earneſt prayers and wiſhes, and that will be ſuch a wonderful fulfilment of Scripture-prophecy, and demonſtration of the truth of the Chriſtian religion. To ſee a nation once ſo highly favoured of God, ſo ancient, ſo honourable, ſo nearly related to Chriſt, and to which, under God, we owe our religion, and all that light and knowledge in things ſpiritual, which we at preſent enjoy, freed from that ſtate of exile, and ſuffering contempt and reproach, under which they have ſo long groaned, and again reſtored to the Divine favour. This, I ſay, cannot but be matter of great joy to all good people, to all that have any thing of Chriſtianity, or even of humanity in them. It muſt, above all, be matter of joy to the poor Jews themſelves to be freed from ſuch a ſtate, and the longer their ſufferings have laſted, the greater joy it muſt give them to ſee them brought to an end at laſt. This is evident; the long continuance of an affliction is an aggravation of it, and the greater any affliction is, the greater is our joy when delivered from it. It is ſaid in the 126th Pſalm, when the Lord turned back the captivity of Zion, "we were "like them that dreamed," that is, their joy was ſo great, they could hardly believe it was real, but were almoſt tempted to think it was a dream; and if this was the caſe, when they were brought back from their firſt captivity, it will be ſtill more ſo when they are brought back from their ſecond. This, therefore, ſeems to be one of the reaſons why God has been pleaſed to exclude the Jews from his church, to hide his

his face from them, and to afflict them for ſo long a time, namely, to make them more ſenſible of the value of his friendſhip, and to increaſe their joy, and that of the church in general, whenſoever he ſhall be pleaſed again to receive them into his favour.

Another reaſon of this is, that when once they are converted and brought to a ſenſe of their ſin in rejecting the Goſpel, it may ſerve as a means to prevent their falling into the ſame or a like ſin for the future. Men are not ſo likely to fall into any ſin after they have ſeverely ſmarted for it: and ſurely if any thing can ſuffice to prevent the Jews from apoſtatizing, and to inſure their future obedience, it muſt be the remembrance of their preſent long captivity, and the calamities they have undergone during the time of it. Indeed, the ſufferings which their unbelief and diſobedience to the call of the Goſpel has coſt them, have been ſo ſevere, and of ſuch a long continuance, that it is not likely they will ever fall into any ſuch heinous ſin again. But as the firſt captivity cured them of their proneſs to idolatry; ſo the ſecond, that is, their preſent captivity, will cure them of all thoſe vices, for which they have ſo long been a by-word, and a curſe to the reſt of mankind, and produce a reformation upon them that will laſt to the end of time. Accordingly, it is promiſed, that when once they are brought back from their preſent captivity, God will no more hide his face from them nor afflict them, Ezek. xxxix. and 3. laſt verſes, and Iſa. liv. and 9. "This is as the wa-
"ters of Noah unto me; for as I have ſworn that the
"waters of Noah ſhould no more go over the earth;
"ſo have I ſworn, that I would not be wroth with

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" thee nor rebuke thee." And this leads me to another reaſon, why God has been pleaſed ſo long to hide his face from his ancient people, and to afflict them; and that is, to prepare them for that ſtate of happineſs and proſperity which he intends for them when once they are brought to repentance and acknowledgement of the truth. Proſperity is a ſtate dangerous to all men, but eſpecially to the unprincipled and unexperienced part of mankind; therefore, when Providence intends to beſtow any large meaſure of worldly proſperity on his own people, he always takes care to prepare them for it, by a previous courſe of afflictions and trials. Thus, the Patriarch Joſeph went through a long ſeries of temptations and afflictions, before he was exalted to that place of dignity and power, which he afterwards held in the court of Pharaoh. David was long hunted as a partridge in the wilderneſs, and perſecuted by Saul, before he came to the kingdom. The Iſraelites were firſt ſore oppreſſed in Egypt, and afterwards ſuffered many hardſhips and trials in the wilderneſs, before they got poſſeſſion of the promiſed land; and, in theſe inſtances, the end of Providence no doubt was, to fit and prepare thoſe who were thus tried for that happineſs which he afterwards beſtowed on them. Affliction has a natural tendency to fit men for the enjoyment of proſperity. It purifies and enlightens the mind, ſubdues our paſſions, corrects our vices, and meliorates our tempers, and ſo qualifies us for acting with propriety in a more exalted ſtation. It lowers our eſteem of the world, gives us a practical ſenſe of its vanity, and of the vanity of all its enjoyments, ſo

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that our proſperity does not affect us as otherwiſe it would. It humbles our pride, makes us ſenſible of our weakneſs and dependence upon God, and ſo prevents our being lifted up with our proſperity. It makes us ſeek to God, who is the only help in time of trouble, and thereby ſtrengthens the religious principle, which is the only ſafeguard to virtue, and preſervative againſt the vices to which proſperity tempts men. Thus, adverſity prepares men for the enjoyment of proſperity; and, in like manner, the long captivity and ſufferings of the Jews ſeem well calculated to fit them for that ſtate of proſperity, ſo often mentioned in Scripture, as deſtined for them in the latter days. It muſt have a great effect to convince them of the evil of ſin, and conſequently to fortify them againſt any temptations, to which ſuch a ſtate of proſperity may expoſe them, and ſurely if any afflictions can produce this effect, it muſt be thoſe which the Jews as a people have endured; for, if we take in all the circumſtances, greater ſufferings than theirs never were endured by any people on earth.

2dly, The rejection of the Jews, or their having been ſo long excluded from the church of Chriſt, and in a ſtate of exile and affliction, muſt have a great effect to make them kind and compaſſionate towards their fellow-creatures in any ſituation that claims their pity or aſſiſtance, eſpecially towards ſuch as ſhall ſtill be found deſtitute of the means of ſalvation, living under the power of Heatheniſh and Mahometan errors. The natural effect of ſuffering, is to beget ſympathy. Affliction ſoftens the heart, and makes it ſuſceptible of good impreſſions: *Haud ingara mali miſeris*

miſeris ſuccurre diſco ; but we are moſt of all apt to ſympathize with thoſe whoſe ſufferings are of the ſame kind with what we ourſelves have formerly experienced. Now the caſe of the Jews at preſent, is much the ſame with that of other unbelieving nations. They are equally the children of wrath, and in danger of everlaſting miſery, equally ſtrangers to the comforts of the Goſpel, to the peace and joy that flows from a true and living faith in the doctrines of Chriſtianity ; and therefore, whenſoever it ſhall pleaſe God to reſcue them from this miſerable ſtate, they cannot but be diſpoſed to pity and ſuccour their fellow-creatures that are ſtill in it. I ſay this on the ſuppoſition, that when the Jews are converted to Chriſtianity, there will ſtill be occaſion for the exerciſe of this kind of charity, ſtill ſome nations, as well as individuals, without the knowledge and comforts of the Goſpel ; and that they themſelves, though late, will not be the laſt of the nations that are converted, as ſome have aſſerted, but I think without ſufficient grounds. It is ſaid indeed, Romans xi. and 25. " That blindneſs in " part has happened to Iſrael, till the fulneſs of the " Gentiles be come ;" which ſeems to imply, that the Jews will not be converted till all the Gentiles are brought in. But though the words admit of this ſenſe, they admit alſo of others, and no ſingle text muſt be interpreted, ſo as to contradict the general current and tenor of Scripture, or the plain ſenſe of a great many other texts ; for it appears from ſeveral paſſages of the prophets, that the Jews are firſt to be converted themſelves, and afterwards to be the means or inſtruments of bringing in other nations to the knowledge

knowledge and faith of the Goſpel. So Iſaiah lx. and 3. " And the Gentiles ſhall come to thy light, and " kings to the brightneſs of thy riſing." This, as the reader may ſee by conſulting the paſſage, follows immediately after their reſtoration ſpoken of in the 1ſt and 2d verſes. To the ſame purpoſe alſo is that of Iſaiah lxvi. and 18. " It ſhall come to paſs, that " I will gather all nations, and they ſhall come and " ſee my glory, and I will ſet a ſign among them, " and I will ſend thoſe that eſcape of them, that is " of the Jews, unto the nations—to the iſles afar, " that have not heard my fame, neither have ſeen " my glory, and they ſhall declare my glory among " the Gentiles." Here, I think, it is alſo plainly aſſerted that the Jews ſhall be the means of enlightening and converting the Gentiles. If it be ſaid, that this prophecy has been already fulfilled, viz. when the Apoſtles, who were Jews by birth, were ſent to diſtant nations to convert them; I anſwer, it was ſo in part, but that it is yet to be fulfilled in a more eminent degree, is evident from what follows in the 20th verſe. " And they ſhall bring all your brethren " for an offering to the Lord out of all the nations " upon horſes and in chariots, &c:" none of which things have ever yet happened. See alſo the 10th, 11th, and 12th verſes of the ſame chapter, and chapter ii. and 2. alſo Jeremiah iv. and 17. and chapter xii. and 16. in all which places, the happineſs and reſtoration of Iſrael, is ſpoken of as previous to the general ingathering of the Heathen. It appears alſo from ſeveral paſſages of the prophets, that after the converſion and reſtoration of the Jews, there is ſome great

great enemy to invade them, which it is not likely any nation profeſſing Chriſtianity will do: Beſides, I have already ſhewn, that the enemy who is to do this, is no other than the great Turk: ſee the xxxviii. and xxxix. chapters of Ezek. and what I have ſaid upon them, page 59 and downwards.

Another place where this enemy is ſpoken of, and which, like the other, proves, that for ſome time after the Jews are converted, there will ſtill be ſome nations living in unbelief and enmity to Chriſt, is the 9th of Zech. and five laſt verſes, which, as it is ſomewhat obſcure, we ſhall endeavour to explain. "When I "have bent Judah for me, filled the bow with Eph-"raim, and raiſed up thy ſons, O Zion, againſt thy "ſons, O Greece, and made thee as the ſword of a "mighty man; and the Lord ſhall be ſeen over "them, &c." That this prophecy is yet to be fulfilled, appears from the following reaſons: 1ſt, It comes in after another notable one, concerning the coming of our Saviour, and is connected with it; all the verſes from the 9th, to the end of the chapter hanging upon one another, and making one continued prophecy or thread of diſcourſe, which makes it probable, that the events here predicted viz. in the five laſt verſes, are poſterior to his appearance mentioned in the 9th and 10th verſes; but ſince our Saviour's days, nothing like to theſe events has yet happened, nor have the Jews performed any exploits like to theſe here aſcribed to them by the prophet; therefore, the accompliſhment of this part of the prophecy is ſtill future. 2dly, The events here predicted are placed by the prophet, not only after the coming of

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our Saviour, but even after the converſion of the Jews; for of this event the 11th verſe is certainly to be underſtood. " As for thee alſo, by the blood of thy co-" venant I have ſent forth thy priſoners out of the pit " wherein there is no water." It appears from what Mr Hutchiſon has ſaid upon this paſſage, that the pronoun thee, in the beginning of the verſe, refers not to the Meſſiah ſpoken of in the words immediately preceding, but to the daughter of Zion, in the beginning of the 9th verſe, and that the whole of the 10th verſe is to be conſidered as a parentheſis. His reaſons for this opinion are pretty obvious: 1ſt, All that is ſaid in the preceding context, is ſpoken to the daughter of Zion in the ſecond perſon, or ſhe is the perſon to whom the prophet addreſſes himſelf, whereas all that is ſaid of the Meſſiah is ſpoken of him in the third perſon: " He is juſt and having ſalvation, &c:" and as in the 11th verſe, the prophet ſpeaks alſo in the ſecond perſon, it is natural to think that it is the ſame perſon that is ſpoken to in both places. 3dly, The connection of the words with thoſe immediately preceding, proves this, viz. that Zion is the perſon ſpoken to. The prophet firſt foretels the converſion of the Gentiles, viz. in the end of the 10th verſe, " He ſhall " ſpeak peace unto the Heathen, &c." and then adds immediately in this, " As for thee alſo, by the blood " of thy covenant I have ſent forth thy priſoners, &c." Here you ſee the perſon ſpoken to, is diſtinguiſhed from the Gentiles; and who can this be but Zion or the Jews? It is probable alſo, from this connection of the words, that the bleſſing here promiſed to the Jews, is of the ſame kind with that promiſed to the Gentiles,

Gentiles, namely, their converſion and reſtoration to the Divine favour. But let us ſee if the words will bear this ſenſe: "As for thee alſo, by the blood of "thy covenant, &c." as if he had ſaid, I have juſt now told you the deſigns of Providence with reſpect to the Heathen, that the Meſſiah, when he comes, will ſpeak peace to them; i. e. by the preaching of his Apoſtles among them, many of them ſhall then be converted and brought into the church, and in proceſs of time, the whole Gentile world ſhall be ſo: His dominion ſhall be from ſea to ſea, and from the river to the ends of the earth. As for you, O ye Jews, I have thoughts of mercy and kindneſs for you too; though for the puniſhment of your ſins, your abuſe of my mercies, and other holy ends, I have reſolved to caſt you off from being my people, and you ſhall accordingly be long in a ſtate of captivity and ſuffering, without the light of my countenance, or any of the tokens of my favour you formerly enjoyed; yet out of this miſerable ſtate I will, for ſake of the covenant or promiſes I made to your fathers, at laſt deliver you, and compenſate your long ſufferings by a ſtate of the greateſt proſperity and happineſs that ever any people on earth enjoyed. As for thee alſo, by the blood of thy covenant, I have ſent forth thy priſoners out of the pit wherein there is no water. By the blood of thy covenant, that is, by virtue of the covenant that I made with your fathers at Sinai, wherein I promiſed to be their God and the God of their poſterity for ever, which covenant I have often ſince renewed with additional promiſes, that I would never wholly caſt them off; but if for their ſins they ſhould

ſhould be led into captivity by their enemies, I would have mercy on them, and gather them, and bring them again to their own land, and though their ſins ſhould be ever ſo great, I would not only forgive them on condition of their repentance, but would moreover grant them the grace of repentance, give them a new heart, put my Spirit into them, and cauſe them to walk in my ways. By the blood of this covenant, that is, by virtue thereof, or to fulfill the promiſes therein contained, I have ſent forth thy priſoners out of the pit wherein is no water, I have delivered thy children, O Zion, from that ſtate of guilt and ſuffering, of captivity and exile, under which they have ſo long groaned. As for thee alſo, by the blood of thy covenant. As Zion is the perſon to whom the prophet addreſſes himſelf, it is evident that the covenant here ſpoken of can be no other than the Sinai covenant. The Goſpel or New-Teſtament covenant was made, not with the Iſraelites or Jews only, but alſo with the Gentiles, even with the whole elect world; and therefore the prophet, ſpeaking to the Jews, could not with propriety call it their covenant as he does the covenant here ſpoken of, which muſt therefore be the Sinai covenant. This covenant was ratified by the ſhedding and ſprinkling of blood, as appears from Exodus xxiv. and 8. And therefore the obligation it laid on the parties concerned to fulfil their ſeveral engagements, is here called the blood thereof. As for thee alſo, by the blood of thy covenant, I have ſent forth thy priſoners out of the pit wherein there is no water. Great affliction or diſtreſs of any kind, is ſometimes in Scripture repreſented by being caſt into

into a pit: ſo Pſalm xl. and 2. "He brought me up alſo out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, &c." See alſo Pſalm lxxxviii. and 6. It appears alſo from this of Zechariah and other places, that it was uſual in thoſe days to confine priſoners and captives in pits or dungeons: ſee Iſaiah xxiv. and 22. and chap. li. and 14. and Jeremiah xxxviii. and 6. And therefore it is with peculiar propriety that the phraſe is here uſed to ſignify a ſtate of captivity and ſuffering; ſuch as that in which the Jews have now of a long time been. Wherein there is no water: this perhaps is intended to ſignify the greatneſs of the miſery which the Jews, ſince the commencement of their preſent captivity, have for the moſt part endured, and out of which God here promiſes to deliver them. As water is one of the neceſſaries, and greateſt bleſſings of life; ſo, to be wholly deſtitute of it, is a very diſtreſſing ſituation; and the Jews being here ſaid to be in this ſituation, is perhaps a metaphor, to ſignify the greatneſs of their diſtreſs during the captivity here ſpoken of; and in this ſenſe it is uſed, Iſaiah xli. and 17. and Jeremiah xlviii. and 18. and divers other places: or rather by the want of water, I think we are here to underſtand the want of comfort, eſpecially ſpiritual comfort. As thirſt is a very painful ſenſation and hard to be endured, it is often uſed metaphorically for affliction in general; and as water is the principal thing that quenches thirſt, or the uſual remedy for it, it is frequently put for comfort, or whatever alleviates or gives relief from pain: ſee the paſſages juſt now quoted, alſo Iſaiah xliv. and 3. In both ſenſes this part of the prophecy is literally and exactly fulfilled

filled in the preſent ſtate of the Jews. They are not only in a ſtate of exile and ſuffering, but they have no ſolid ground of comfort under it, not only hated, perſecuted, and deſpiſed by the world, as many a good Chriſtian has been; but they have not that to ſupport them which the other commonly has. Having little knowledge of the Goſpel, and no faith at all in its doctrines, they can derive no conſolation from it; nay, the doubts which one would think they muſt at times have of its truth, cannot but fill them with terror, for having continued ſo long and with ſuch enmity to oppoſe it. Neither can their own religion afford them any ſolid comfort. The Law of Moſes, which is the foundation of their religion, contains but few things that can give any relief to the mind, when oppreſſed with a ſenſe either of its guilt or miſery, or from which a perſon in affliction can derive any conſolation. There is in it no expreſs mention of another life, nor of a future reward, nor promiſe of Divine aid; it admits of no atonement for wilful or heinous ſins; nay, it makes no allowance for human frailty, but pronounces a curſe upon every one, that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the Law to do them. Though the Old Teſtament, when ſpiritually, that is, when rightly underſtood, is the ſame with the Goſpel; teaches the ſame doctrines concerning the Being and perfections of God, the fall of man and his recovery by means of a Saviour; yet what is clearly revealed in the latter, concerning many of theſe important truths, is in the former wholly under a vail, wrapt up in types, viſions, ſymbolical repreſentations, and dark prophecies, which, without a fur-

ther revelation, that is, without the Goſpel, could never have been underſtood; and therefore, to thoſe who have no faith in the Goſpel, the Law, or Old Teſtament, can afford very little comfort. Though the Jews acknowledge the Being of God, and alſo profeſs to believe in a future ſtate; yet to guilty creatures, ſuch as we are, the knowledge of theſe truths, without ſome farther diſcovery concerning the mercy of God, and his willingneſs to be reconciled to ſinners, is more apt to inſpire men with fear than with hope and joy. From all which it appears, that the Jews, ever ſince the commencement of their preſent captivity, have been in a moſt deplorable ſtate, not only in a ſtate of outward affliction and trouble, but likewiſe deſtitute of all inward joy and comfort; and this is what ſeems to be intended by their being in a pit, in which there is no water. They want the light of God's countenance, the joy of his holy Spirit, and all the conſolations which the Goſpel affords; all which are in Scripture often ſignified by water. See, Iſa. lv. and 1. Rev. xxii. and 17. John iv. and 14. and chapter vi. and 35. Out of this miſerable ſtate God here promiſes to deliver them, as he does in many other places: as for thee alſo, by the blood of thy covenant, I have ſent forth thy priſoners out of the pit, wherein there is no water. He ſpeaks of the future as if it were already paſt, by a figure of ſpeech very common with the prophetic writers. I have ſent forth thy priſoners out of the pit; I have delivered thee from thy long and diſmal captivity: or rather, I have opened a door of mercy to thee, broken the yoke of thy oppreſſor, and made a way for thee to e-

ſcape:

ſcape: ſo it follows, Turn ye to your ſtrong hold, ye priſoners of hope. Flee from the land of your enemies to Zion or Jeruſalem, which was once your inheritance, your glory and defence, and where you ſhall again find a place of refuge and ſafety. Turn ye to your ſtrong hold; ſo mount Zion, or the earthly Jeruſalem, is expreſsly called, Micah iv. and 8. And thou, O Tower of the flock, the ſtrong hold of the daughter of Zion, unto thee ſhall it come, even the firſt dominion. The one place ſeems parallel unto, and is illuſtrated by the other; or, by their ſtrong hold, we may underſtand Chriſt the rock of ages, who has been the refuge and dwelling place of his people in all generations. Taking the word in this ſenſe, the meaning of the paſſage is, the time of your converſion is now come; therefore, flee to Chriſt by a true and ſincere repentance, return to him from whom you have revolted, and he will have mercy on you, and turn back your captivity, even to day do I declare, that I will render double unto thee, that is, I will render thee a double recompence for thy ſufferings and ſorrows, make thy proſperity and happineſs double of what thy affliction and miſery hath been, or give thee double ſatisfaction on thine enemies; that is, take double vengeance on them for the ſuffering which they have made thee endure: ſo it follows, when I have bent Judah for me, and filled the bow with Ephraim, that is, when I have made Judah my bow and Ephraim my arrow, made them the inſtruments in bringing down and puniſhing the enemies of my church and people, and raiſed up thy ſons, O Zion, againſt thy ſons, O Greece, that is, againſt the Turks,

who

who have their chief reſidence and the ſeat of their empire in Greece, and whoſe forces conſiſt chiefly of Greek ſoldiers, and may therefore, with the greateſt propriety, be called the ſons of Greece. Againſt this great and formidable enemy of the church, God here promiſes to raiſe up his ancient people, and to make them as the ſword of a mighty man, to hew him and cut him down. And the Lord ſhall be ſeen over them, and his arrow ſhall go forth as the lightning; that is, he will diſplay his power and Providence by ſome ſignal or miraculous interpoſition in their behalf, by granting them an extraordinary aſſiſtance, and their enemies a complete and total overthrow: all of which circumſtances agree ſo exactly to the deſcription that is given of the battle and overthrow of Gog, in the xxxviii. and xxxix. of Ezek. that there is no room to doubt that both places refer to the ſame event. And as the battle of Gog in Ezekiel is ſaid to be after the reſtoration of the Jews, ſo muſt this of Zechariah. It is evident alſo, that at the time when this prophecy is fulfilled, the Jews are a people in favour with God, under his ſpecial protection and conduct, (ſee from the 13th verſe to the end), which cannot be while they are in a ſtate of infidelity and enmity to Chriſt, and therefore it muſt be ſome time after their converſion that this prophecy is to be fulfilled; but they are here repreſented as waging war with the inhabitants of Greece. When I have bent Judah for me, and filled the bow with Ephraim, and raiſed up thy ſons, O Zion, againſt thy ſons, O Greece; conſequently there muſt be infidels in the world at that time; becauſe, as I ſaid before, it is not likely that

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any nation profeſſing Chriſtianity will meddle with the Jews after their converſion: Sure I am, no power that is truly Chriſtian will do ſo. From what has been ſaid, therefore, it appears, that after the converſion and reſtoration of the Jews, there will ſtill be infidels in the world, not individuals only, but nations, powers and governments; namely, the Turk, and thoſe whom we have already mentioned, as joining with him in his expedition againſt the Jews: conſequently that of Romans xi. and 25. blindneſs in part has happened to Iſrael, &c. cannot mean, that the converſion of the Jews is not to happen till all the Gentiles are come in, but muſt be interpreted ſo as to agree with the paſſages above quoted.

Firſt, Then, by the fulneſs of the Gentiles, we may here underſtand a great number or multitude of them, greater by far than was in the Apoſtle's days; there being many inſtances, both in Scripture and other good authors, of ſuch ways of ſpeaking, where the whole is put for a part. See John xii. and 19. Luke ii. and 1. 2dly, The word till does not always denote the preciſe or exact time when the thing ſpoken of is to happen; ſo till Shiloh come, does not perhaps ſignify till Shiloh is come, but till about the time of his coming. Accordingly, the ſceptre was in a good meaſure departed from Judah before the time of our Saviour's public appearance. In like manner, till the fulneſs of the Gentiles be come in, may ſignify till about the time when the fullneſs of the Gentiles is brought in; conſequently, notwithſtanding of this text, the converſion of the Jews may happen ſome little time before the general ingathering of the Heathen,

then, agreeably to what ſeems elſewhere to be expreſsly aſſerted. But, I confeſs, I am not quite ſatisfied with either of theſe ways of explaining this paſſage, as the words of the ſacred writers are generally more preciſe and determinate: Therefore,

3dly, Another way of removing the difficulty, is, by altering the tranſlation a little, which the original well admits of. The word *eiseltbe*, which we render be come in, is the 2d aoriſt of the ſubjunctive, and the aoriſts have often the ſignification of the future, eſpecially in the ſubjunctive and optative moods; ſo the words may be rendered, till the fulneſs of the Gentiles is to come in, or till the time when the fulneſs of the Gentiles is to come in.

4thly, By the Gentiles we may underſtand the Roman empire, or nations belonging to it. Theſe were the Gentiles with whom the Apoſtle was beſt acquainted, and had the greateſt connexion; the people whoſe Apoſtle he was, and for whoſe converſion he was raiſed up; the people which then made the greateſt figure of any in the world, and that do ſo ſtill. They are moreover the people that was called when the Jews were caſt off, and that God ſpeaks of, Deut. xxxii. and 21. when he tells the Iſraelites, that becauſe they had moved him to jealouſy with that which was not God, he would move them to jealouſy with thoſe which were not a people, and provoke them to anger with a fooliſh nation; that is, he would divorce them and put that nation in their place; for though the nations that now make profeſſion of Chriſtianity are many, yet as they have all of them been under one government, ſubject either to Rome, Pagan or Papal,

Papal, they are both here and elſewhere conſidered by the Holy Spirit as one people. It is probable, therefore, that by the Gentiles we are here to underſtand, not the Heathen world at large, but the nations ſubject to the Roman power and monarchy, particularly thoſe that have been ſubject to modern or Papal Rome. Theſe are expreſsly called the Gentiles by our Saviour, Luke xxi. and 24. Jeruſalem ſhall be trodden down of the Gentiles, till the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled, for by the times of the Gentiles we are here to underſtand, as I have already ſhewn the time, times and a half of the reign of Antichriſt. The word ſeems alſo to be uſed in this ſenſe, as Mr Poole thinks, Acts iv. and 27. and chap. xxi. and 11. Taking the Gentiles then in this place to ſignify the Roman monarchy, or nations ſubject to it, by the cōming in of their fulneſs, we may underſtand their being all converted to true genuine Chriſtianity, or brought to a right underſtanding of the doctrines and precepts of the Goſpel, which has never yet been the caſe; for, not to ſpeak of individuals, of which there are vaſt numbers in every country groſsly ignorant in matters of religion, ſeveral great nations ſtill continue in their ſubjection to the church of Rome, and are in a ſtate little if any thing at all better than Paganiſm. It is true, theſe nations were once good Chriſtians, I mean before the riſe of Popery; but when this was the caſe, there were other parts of Europe without any knowledge of the Goſpel at all. Moſt of the northern nations, ſuch as the Engliſh, Saxons, Danes, and a great part of Germany, being at that time in a ſtate of perfect Heatheniſm, and by the time theſe were converted,

converted, the other had degenerated; ſo that, as I ſaid, the whole of the Roman empire or Europe has never yet been properly converted or brought in. If it be objected, that the northern nations above mentioned were never within the pale of the Roman empire, I anſwer, not indeed while Rome was Pagan or under the Caeſarean head, but they certainly were ſo afterward, when ſhe came under the laſt head or during the reign of Antichriſt: and it is chiefly the nations that are, and have been under his juriſdiction, that are here meant by the Gentiles. The meaning of this paſſage therefore is, that the blindneſs of the Jews will continue till all theſe or the greater part are properly converted, and brought to a right underſtanding of the doctrines and inſtitutions of the Goſpel; or, in other words, till a general reformation takes place in the church, that is, till the fall of Popery. So this paſſage agrees exactly with thoſe other places mentioned before, where the converſion of the Jews is made to coincide with the fall of Antichriſt, and to happen prior to the general ingathering of the Heathen. Till the fulneſs of the Gentiles be come in, may alſo ſignify till theſe Gentiles are fully, that is, thoroughly converted, which, as we ſaid before of the other ſenſe, has never yet happened, Papiſts being but a ſort of half Chriſtians. But now that the reformed religion has been eſtabliſhed, and that Popery is falling every day more and more, there is reaſon to hope, that the time when this propheey will receive its accompliſhment is not very diſtant. Mr Poole's interpretation of this paſſage, which the reader will find in his Notes, is, though ſomewhat different from the above,

above, yet agrees with it as to the main thing, namely, that the converſion of the Jews will coincide with the fall of Antichriſt, and precede the general ingathering of the Heathen. But taking the words of the Apoſtle, Rom. xi. and 25. as they ſtand, or in the ſtricteſt ſenſe, all that we can infer from them is, that the whole of the Jewiſh nation will not be converted till the fulneſs of the Gentiles be come in; that is, there will always be a conſiderable part of them remaining in unbelief, to be witneſſes to the reſt of mankind of the truth of the Goſpel, till the fulneſs of the Gentiles or greater part of them be converted; but that does not hinder why there may not be a general converſion and ingathering of them before that time. There may be a general or national converſion of that people at any given time; though many individuals, or even a conſiderable part of them, continue afterwards to hold out.

Thus, we ſay, the Scots embraced the Proteſtant religion in the the time of John Knox, though there were many Papiſts in the country after that time, and not a few continue to this day. We cannot therefore, from this paſſage, infer that the converſion of the Jews will not happen till all the Gentiles are brought in. The contrary is probable, nay, I think certain from Scripture, namely, that the converſion of the Jews is to precede that of the Heathen, and to be a means of it. To the paſſages above quoted, I ſhall only add another, Rom. xi. and 12. "Now, if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminiſhing of them the riches of the Gentiles, how much more their fulneſs?" By the riches of the world and

of the Gentiles, it is evident we muſt here underſtand their converſion, and being made partakers of all the bleſſings and benefits of the Goſpel. Now, ſays the Apoſtle, if the rejection of the Jews was the means of enlightening, converting, and ſaving ſuch a number of the Gentiles, the fulneſs of the Jews, or the general converſion and ingathering of that people, will be the means of ſaving many more; which could not be, unleſs there were ſtill many of the Gentiles to be converted that is in a ſtate of unbelief. It is true, the converſion of the Jews may, and no doubt will be the riches of the Gentiles, or a bleſſing to them many ways, beſides bringing ſuch of them as continue in unbelief to the profeſſion of Chriſtianity; but this ſeems to be the thing chiefly intended by the Apoſtle; for both the fall of the Jews, and their future converſion, are here ſaid to be the riches of the Gentiles; and as we cannot ſuppoſe, that in one and the ſame ſentence, the Apoſtle would uſe the phraſe in different ſenſes, the riſe or converſion of the Jews muſt be the riches of the Gentiles, in the ſame ſenſe in which their fall was; but this was the riches of the Gentiles chiefly, as it was the means of their converſion; and therefore, the other, that is, the future converſion of the Jews, muſt be the riches of the Gentiles in that ſenſe too; that is, a means of convincing them, and bringing them to the acknowledgement of the truth. From what has been ſaid, therefore, it is evident, that the converſion of the Jews will precede the general ingathering of the Heathen, and be a means of it. To this end it will probably contribute ſeveral ways.

First, As it will be a great proof of the truth of Chriſtianity.

Chriſtianity. The addition of ſo great a body of men, as that of the whole Jewiſh nation to the church of Chriſt, together with the fulfilment of ſo many Scripture prophecies, as thoſe which relate to that event, will be not only a new ſong put into the mouths of believers, but likewiſe a new argument, which may be of great ſervice to them in their diſputes with infidels, or in their attempts to convince and convert them. That it will be ſo has been already ſhewn; and as the Heathen nations are many of them highly civilized, capable of examining and comprehending the force of an argument, it is to be hoped, that one ſo powerful and convincing, ſo new and ſtriking, when properly managed, will have great weight with many of them to turn them. But,

2dly, As the Jews are a great and powerful nation, and well known in moſt countries, it is to be hoped, that their example in renouncing their errors, and coming over to the ſtandard of Chriſt, will help to draw others after them. But beſides this, there is every reaſon to believe, that the Jews themſelves will contribute much to the converſion of the Heathen, by their labours and exertions among them for that purpoſe. This we think they will be inclined to do, not only from the motive before mentioned, viz. ſympathy, flowing from the remembrance of their having themſelves been in the ſame deplorable ſtate, but alſo from gratitude to the Divine Being for having reſcued them from it, and from a laudable ambition to retrieve the honour of their nation, and to wipe away the reproach of their former diſobedience and infidelity, by ſome ſignal ſervice done to the church

church and cauſe of Chriſt. And that the Jews, when they are converted, will exert themſelves this way, viz. by endeavouring to bring over other unbelieving nations to the Chriſtian faith, is farther probable from this, that they are of all people the beſt qualified for ſuch an office. As they have long been ſcattered among the nations, and are to be found in moſt countries of the world, they muſt know the language, genius, and cuſtoms of moſt nations, and conſequently how to addreſs them and ſuit themſelves to them. They muſt likewiſe know the ſeveral countries where they have reſided, the roads and way of travelling through them, and have many acquaintances among the inhabitants; and conſequently, in an attempt to convert them, they muſt have greatly the advantage over all other miſſionaries, or of any perſon who knows theſe things only by reading or report. The Jews, taken collectively, may be ſaid to ſpeak all languages, and to know all the countries of the world, with the genius and manners of their inhabitants; and of what uſe this is to qualify them for the office of ſpreading among the nations the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour needs not be told. Indeed, they poſſeſs in a natural way moſt of the endowments and qualifications, which the Apoſtles and firſt teachers of Chriſtianity had in a ſupernatural. To which we may add, that there ſeems to be ſomething in the genius and temper of that people peculiarly adapted to ſuch an office. They are an active, enterprizing ſort of people, accuſtomed to travel, and ſeem to be fond of it. They have a good deal of patience and preſervance in their compoſition, are not eaſily turned or diſſuaded from

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their purpoſe, as their long continued adherence to their religion, notwithſtanding the perſecutions they have ſuffered on account of it ſufficiently proves. They are moreover well acquainted with the Scriptures of the Old Teſtament, and though God has not yet given them eyes to ſee their meaning, their true end and ſcope, yet they underſtand the literal ſenſe, have the words upon their memories, and can quote them. They excel alſo in the knowledge of the original language, and of the manners and cuſtoms of their anceſtors; all of which have a direct tendency to fit them for the office above mentioned.

That the converſion of the Heathen that are ſtill without the pale of the church, is to be effected chiefly by means of the Jews, is farther probable, from the many honours which God has already conferred on that people. They were the firſt church and people of God, and they long enjoyed that privilege before any other nation was admitted to it; and though ſeveral other nations have been received into the church and enjoyed the light of Divine revelation ſince the Jews were caſt off, yet to none of them has God ever manifeſted his kindneſs in that extraordinary manner that he did to them. They were honoured to be the penmen and keepers of the ſacred oracles, the inſtruments by which the Goſpel was at firſt propagated, and it never ſpread ſo faſt as while it was in their hands. The Prophets and Apoſtles were all of that nation; nay, Chriſt, the bleſſed author of our religion, was of the ſeed of Judah according to the fleſh. Theſe extraordinary favours and honours which God has conferred on that people,

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ſhew that he has a peculiar regard for them, or that, for ſome wiſe end, it has been his will to honour them above the reſt of mankind; and this makes it probable that he will yet farther honour them, by making them the inſtruments in his hands of converting and ſaving the nations. Though he has been pleaſed of a long time to hide his face from them and to afflict them, yet that he ſtill regards them as a nation, is evident from his goodneſs in preſerving and ſupporting them ſo long in the world, and the many gracious promiſes he has given them concerning a happineſs and glory that awaits them in the latter days; as, concerning the Goſpel, they are enemies for our ſake, but as touching the election, they are beloved for the Fathers' ſake. There is ground, therefore, to think, that if ever they are reconciled to God, as Scripture aſſures they will be, he will again own them as formerly, and, among other honours, employ them as his inſtruments in converting the nations. To which we may add, that the little progreſs which the Goſpel has made for ſome centuries bygone, and the obſtinacy of ſome Heathen and Mahometan nations in perſiſting in their infidelity, notwithſtanding the attempts that have been made to convert them, makes it farther probable, that ſome extraordinary means is neceſſary to that end: and though I will not venture to affirm, that the converſion of the Jews to the Chriſtian religion, and their ſubſequent endeavours to propagate it, is the means that God deſigns to employ for the converſion of theſe nations; yet, of all the events we can think of as likely ever to happen, or that we have

have any reaſon from Scripture to expect, there is none that appears to us ſo well calculated to produce that effect, unleſs it be the fall of the great Turk, who may be conſidered as the preſent head and high prieſt of the Mahometan religion, its principal defender and ſupport. And in Scripture this laſt event is ſpoken of as hard following upon the other.

For theſe reaſons I am of opinion, that the converſion of the unbelieving nations is to be effected chiefly by means of the Jews, viz. 1ſt, By their own converſion, which will be a great proof of the truth of the Goſpel, and a means of convincing the world at large; and 2dly, By their active ſervices and endeavours to propagate the Chriſtian faith; not that I imgagine all attempts to ſpread the light of the Goſpel among the Heathen will be fruitleſs till the converſion of the Jews takes place, or that the labours of our miſſionaries will prove abortive, I both ſincerely wiſh and hope the contrary. Though the Chriſtian religion never ſpread ſo faſt as in the days of the Apoſtles, yet ſeveral great nations have been converted ſince that time. The Engliſh, or Anglo-Saxons, firſt received the Goſpel about the middle of the ſixth century, the Danes in the eight, the Swedes in the ninth, and the Pruſſians not till the beginning of the thirteenth century; nay, even in theſe laſt ages, the Goſpel is ſtill making progreſs, though ſlowly, by means of the ſettlements and colonies which we and other Chriſtian nations have obtained in foreign parts, which gives ground to hope, that the ſocieties which have lately been formed for the purpoſe of extending the

the bleſſings of the Goſpel to the Heathen, may be the means of enlarging the bounds of the Mediator's kingdom ſtill farther, eſpecially as the Scripture ſeems to be faſt fulfilling; and who knows but their ſucceſs herein may, along with the other great events of the day, prove effectual, through the bleſſing of God, to open the eyes of the Jews, and to bring them to the acknowledgement of the truth: ſtill I am of opinion, that the main body of the Heathen will not be brought in till after the converſion of the Jews; that the Jews, when they are converted, are to be the chief inſtruments in converting the other unbelieving nations; and that one of the ends of Providence in diſperſing them over the world, was to qualify them for this very office, to make them acquainted with the different countries of the world, and with the languages, manners and cuſtoms of the ſeveral nations thereof.

Another of the ends of Providence in excluding the Jews ſo long from the Church of Chriſt, is to manifeſt the Divine inſpiration of the prophecies relating to their converſion. Had this event happened at a much earlier period, within 1000 years or ſo after the publication of the prophecies concerning it, it might have been aſcribed to human foreſight. Men of learning and parts, may, by the help of ſtudy, and a careful examination of the nature and ſituation of affairs, ſometimes foreſee events long before they happen, and inſtances of this have been in the world; but no inſtance can be given of any man's foreſeeing an event near 2000 years before it happened, without the aſſiſtance of Divine inſpiration. But it will perhaps be objected, that though the length of time that intervenes

intervenes betwixt the publication of theſe prophecies and the event to which they refer, would render the accompliſhment of them ſomewhat wonderful; yet in this caſe there would be no need for ſuppoſing them divinely inſpired, or that there is any thing miraculous in them; that the ſacred writers knowing the ſuperiority of the Chriſtian religion above all others, it was natural for them to think, that both Jews and Gentiles would at length come over to it. This objection I confeſs is plauſible, and, if I am not miſtaken, a ſimilar one has been made to the inſpiration of thoſe prophecies of the Old Teſtament, wherein the converſion of the Gentiles is foretold, and which have been in a great meaſure already fulfilled. But ſuch objections come with a bad grace from the mouth of an infidel; for if the Chriſtian religion is ſo reaſonable, ſo much ſuperior to all other religions, that it was natural for the ſacred writers to think that it would one day be univerſal, Why does he oppoſe it or argue againſt it? I would aſk him too, Whence it is that the religious opinions of a few poor fiſhermen and mechanics, or of the old Jews, who were but a ſmall nation, and not very famous for their knowledge of human literature, ſhould ſo far ſurpaſs thoſe of all other nations, even of the learned Greeks and Romans? But perhaps he does not mean that the Chriſtian religion is in itſelf reaſonable or even ſuperior to other religions, but only that the ſacred writers themſelves thought ſo. But how could they think ſo if they knew their religion to be falſe; and if they believed it to be true, then they were no impoſtors. Beſides, if they knew their religion to be falſe, it was not natural for them

to think that it would prevail, but rather the contrary; ſo that Chriſtianity gains as much one way as it loſes another. But let us take a nearer view of this objection: It was natural for the ſacred writers, as they were perſuaded of the truth and excellence of their religion, to think that it would prevail, and that all the world would come over to it at laſt. But upon what was this conjecture founded; for, without a Divine warrant, I can call it no better; was it becauſe they had ſeen the like revolutions before? no, the Old-Teſtament writers had not. One of them, who prophecies of the converſion both of the Jews and Gentiles, complains thus, Jeremiah ii. and 10. "For paſs over the iſles of Chittim, and ſee; and ſend unto Kedar, and conſider diligently, and ſee if there be ſuch a thing. Hath a nation changed their gods, which are yet no gods? but my people have changed their glory, for that which doth not profit." And indeed hiſtory gives no account of any nation changing its religion till the coming of our Saviour; and though the Apoſtles lived to ſee great changes of this kind, if not whole nations, at leaſt great multitudes of ſeveral nations, renounce their Heatheniſh errors, and embrace the Goſpel; yet, without the ſpirit of prophecy, they could not be certain that this was to continue, or that all nations were to come over to their religion. Their being perſuaded of the truth and excellency of Chriſtianity was indeed a ſufficient reaſon for them to wiſh that all men would embrace it; but, without ſome other reaſon it certainly did not afford ground to hope or think that all the world would in time become Chriſtian, much leſs did it warrant them to ſay ſo.

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The goodneſs of a cauſe does not always enſure its ſucceſs; but as virtue is ſometimes unfortunate, ſo the true religion is often borne down by ſuperſtition and error. Of this the long continuance of Paganiſm in ancient times, and in theſe laſt ages the prevalence of Mahometaniſm in the eaſt, and of Popery in the weſt, are notorious inſtances. The ways of Providence ſeem often contrary to our notions of equity and goodneſs. The ſacred writers were ſenſible of this, and ſometimes complain of it; and therefore, without a Divine promiſe, or the ſpirit of prophecy, they could never know that their religion was in proceſs of time to overſpread the whole world. And as they could not infer this from any obſervations on the courſe of Providence, ſo neither could they infer it from the Divine perfections abſtractly conſidered; for though it is natural to think, that under the government of a Being infinitely wiſe, powerful, and good, the cauſe of truth and virtue ſhould finally triumph; yet, as in the courſe of Providence, we often ſee the contrary, vice prevail over virtue, and the truth borne down by ſuperſtition and error; and as the ſacred writers knew there was a life hereafter, wherein truth and virtue ſhould triumph, without a divine revelation they could never know, nay, it could hardly ever enter their thoughts, that they ſhould alſo one day triumph in this world, or that there was a time coming, when piety and virtue ſhould every where prevail, and the knowledge of the Lord cover the earth as the waters cover the ſeas. And as the ſacred writers could not infer this opinion from the ways of Providence, nor from the Divine perfections abſtractly conſidered, ſo neither could they

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do it from their knowledge of human nature, or any obſervations it was poſſible for them to make on the ſame. Indeed, were man as capable as in his ſtate of innocence of diſcerning betwixt good and evil, truth and falſehood, or did we ſee him always acting according to the dictates of reaſon, preferring what is for his real intereſt to what is contrary thereto, nothing could be more natural for thoſe who know the Goſpel, than to hope that all men would in time come over to it; for Chriſtianity is a moſt amiable religion, calculated to alleviate the miſeries, and to correct the vices of mankind: It inſpires us with love, gratitude and reſignation to our Maker, charity and benevolence to our fellow-creatures, and, in a word, gives the greateſt poſſible encouragement to the practice of every virtue. It is alſo a moſt rational religion, its doctrines are all agreeable to the principles of ſound reaſon, and moreover atteſted by the finger of God; and therefore, I ſay, did we ſee men always acting as rational creatures, nothing could be more natural than to hope, that all mankind would in proceſs of time become Chriſtian. But experience teaches us that the bulk of people are governed more by paſſion, prejudice, and a regard to their worldly intereſt, than they are either by reaſon or a ſenſe of duty. Vicious habits too have a mighty influence on the human mind to corrupt it, and often hinder men from acting the part that they ought, and that otherwiſe they would do. The ſacred writers knew the truth of of theſe obſervations, and frequently experienced it in their commerce with mankind. The Apoſtles, or writers of the New Teſtament, did ſo in a particu-

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lar manner in the propagation of Chriſtianity. In this work they met with much oppoſition from the prejudices and vices of mankind. The Goſpel, tho' the wiſdom and power of God, was to the Jews a ſtumbling block, and to the Greeks fooliſhneſs. Prejudice in favours of the ſeveral religions in which each of them had been educated, prejudices againſt Chriſtianity on account of its purity, ſpirituality, and contrariety to their own vicious habits and inclinations, on account of the myſterious nature and difficulty of comprehending ſome of its doctrines; but above all, on account of the ſeemingly ignominious death of its divine author, hindered the greater part of both Jews and Greeks from embracing it. From the ſame cauſes proceeded the barbarous treatment that the Apoſtles and firſt teachers of Chriſtianity often met with. They were perſecuted from city to city, brought before kings and rulers, beat, ſcourged, and impriſoned, and moſt of them finally put to a cruel death, and all through the prejudices and vices of other men: And though at laſt Chriſtianity triumphed over all oppoſition, yet this was not till long after the ſacred writers were all gone to another world. The knowledge, therefore, or experience which they had of the world, and of human nature, could never lead them to conjecture, that the Chriſtian religion would ſucceed or prevail as it has already done, much leſs as they aſſure us it will one day do.

But admitting it was natural for them to think, or conjecture, that their religion would one day be univerſal and prevail over all the world, and alſo that they were wicked enough to palm ſuch conjectures

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on the world as prophecies or divine revelations, although there is no apparent motive, no motive or temptation that we can think of that could induce them ſo to do, How came they to know the circumſtances of this revolution and its concomitant events? Several of theſe are mentioned in Scripture, and they are all of ſuch a nature, that it was impoſſible for any human being, by the mere ſtrength of natural parts, to foreſee them; and if, along with the principal event, viz. the converſion of the Jews, theſe circumſtances ſhould alſo take place, it muſt be an additional proof, that what the ſacred writers have ſaid upon this ſubject is a divine revelation. The circumſtances I mean are as follows:

Firſt, The time when this happy event is to take place. This is expreſsly ſaid to be in the latter days, or laſt ages of the world; ſo Iſaiah ii. and 2. "And it ſhall come to paſs in the laſt days, "that the mountain of the Lord's houſe ſhall be e- "ſtabliſhed in the top of the mountains, and ſhall be "exalted above the hills; and all nations ſhall flow "unto it," &c. This prophecy was fulfilled in part ſoon after the coming of our Saviour, when ſo many great nations were converted to Chriſtianity; but that it looks forward to a more diſtant event, in which it is to receive its full accompliſhment, is evident from what is ſaid in the 4th verſe: "And they ſhall beat "their ſwords into plow-ſhares, and their ſpears into "pruning-hooks: nation ſhall not lift up ſword againſt "nation, neither ſhall they learn war any more." This prophecy, therefore, is chiefly to be underſtood of the general ingathering of the Heathen in the latter days;

days; but this event, and the converſion of the Jews, go hand in hand, as we ſhall ſee by and by. To the ſame purpoſe is that of Hoſea, iii. chap. 4th and 5th verſes: "For the children of Iſrael ſhall abide many "days without a king, and without a prince, and "without a ſacrifice," &c. "Afterward ſhall the "children of Iſrael return, and ſeek the Lord their "God, and David their king, and ſhall fear the Lord, "and his goodneſs in the latter days." So Jeremiah xxxi. and 17. "And there is hope in thine end, ſaith "the Lord, that thy children ſhall come again to "their own border." This ſhews that the reſtoration of the Jews is not to be till a very late period; for, as it is elſewhere promiſed, that the Jews ſhall never periſh as a nation, nor be confounded with the reſt of mankind, their end muſt be the ſame with that of the world. For the better underſtanding of this paſſage, it is neceſſary to obſerve, that as the phraſe, in thine end, certainly means a very late period, ſo it is not to be underſtood ſtrictly, as if the reſtoration of the Jews was not to be till the very laſt, or the end of all things; for to what purpoſe ſhould they be reſtored then, when neither they, nor the reſt of mankind could enjoy any benefit, at leaſt no laſting benefit from their reſtoration. To the ſame purpoſe, alſo, is that of Iſaiah lxi. and 4. where ſpeaking of the reſtoration of the Jews, he ſays, "They ſhall re-"pair the waſte cities, the deſolations of many ge-"nerations." This I think implies, that before the return of the Jews here ſpoken of, their country was to be deſolate for many generations, as all the accounts given of it by travellers aſſure us it has been,

during

during the greater part of the time that their preſent captivity has laſted. Agreeable to theſe prophecies, the Millennium, which, according to all interpreters, is ſoon to follow the converſion of the Jews, is deſcribed by Daniel, and the author of the revelation, in the end of their books, as the laſt concluding ſcene, after a long ſeries of wars and perſecutions, that the church was to ſuffer from the hand of her enemies. See Dan. xii. and 12. and Rev. from the xxth chapter to the end.

Farther, that the Jews, before their converſion, were to be long in a ſtate of unbelief, under a divine infatuation or judicial blindneſs as it is called; ſo that ſeeing they ſhould not ſee, and hearing they ſhould not underſtand, is foretold Iſaiah vith chapter, from the 9th verſe to the end. That they would be among the laſt of the nations that would embrace the Goſpel, is foretold by our Saviour, Mat. xx. and 16. "So the laſt ſhall be firſt, and the firſt laſt." The meaning of which, as is plain from the context, is, that the Gentiles, who, of the two claſſes in which mankind are ſo often divided in Scripture, were the laſt that were admitted into the church, would, after the change that was ſhortly to be made in the ſtate of religion, be the firſt that would be admitted into it, whereas the Jews, who were the firſt church and people of God, the firſt nation with which he entered into covenant, and to which he was pleaſed to reveal himſelf, would be the laſt, or among the laſt that would be admitted to the benefits and privileges of the new covenant. This is alſo implied in the words of the Apoſtle, Rom. xi. and 25. "Blindneſs in

"part

" part has happened to Iſrael, till the fulneſs of the " Gentiles be come in;" that is, the blindneſs and unbelief of the Jews will continue till the whole or greater part of the Gentiles be converted, or rather till the time when the main body of the Gentiles, the greater part of whom are ſtill without the pale of the church, is to be converted and brought into it; in other words, the converſion of the Jews will not take place till the time of the general ingathering of the Heathen; but whether it will immediately precede, go along with it, or follow it, I ſhall not now enquire. But beſides theſe paſſages in which the ſacred writers aſſert only in general terms, that the converſion of the Jews was to be at a very late or diſtant period, there are others in which they ſpeak with more preciſion, and from which it may be clearly inferred, that this event was not to happen till more than 1500 years after the time of the Apoſtles. It is placed by Daniel after the time, times and a half of Antichriſt, which, as all interpreters agree, ſignify a thouſand two hundred and threeſcore years: And that this is the meaning of them, has been proved by many of theſe interpreters, by comparing this with other parallel texts, and ſimilar phraſes uſed in Scripture: See Biſhop Newton on the Prophecies, and More's Myſtery of Godlineſs. Now the earlieſt period from which we can reckon theſe years, is the year 328 after Chriſt, when Conſtantine, by tranſlating the ſeat of the empire from Rome to Conſtantinople, gave riſe to the Pope's authority. Indeed moſt writers, for good reaſons, place the riſe of Antichriſt at a much latter period; but, for argument's ſake, let

us place it there, and the end of the 1260 years of his reign will bring us down to the year 1588. So that according to Daniel, the converſion of the Jews could not happen till 15 centuries after Chriſt at the leaſt.

Another way of making out theſe 15 centuries is this: Firſt, The church was to continue pretty pure for ſome time, and hiſtory informs us it did ſo for more than three centuries; then there was to be a falling away among Chriſtians, and the Man of Sin was to make his appearance, according to that of the Apoſtle, 2d Theſ. ii. chapter from the 3d to the 13th verſe. And this Man of Sin was to continue 1260 years according to Daniel, chapter vii. and 25. and Rev. chapter xiii. and 5. for that the time, times and a half of the one place, and the forty-two months of the other, ſignify juſt ſo many years, is the opinion of all that have wrote upon this ſubject, and is proved to a demonſtration by Mr Mede and Biſhop Newton; and after the 1260 years are finiſhed, comes on the converſion of the Jews: See Daniel chap. xii. and 7. So that according to the ſacred writers, there is at leaſt 1500 years betwixt this event and the time when the prophecies were written; and though the time when the Jews are to be converted is not revealed ſo clearly as to enable any one to tell preciſely when it will happen, yet it is clear enough to anſwer all the ends for which the prophecies relative to this event were given; clear enough when joined with other circumſtances, mentioned by the ſacred writers, to prove, when the event attended with theſe circumſtances takes place, that their predictions concerning

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it were divinely inſpired; nay, what is ſaid in Scripture concerning this one circumſtance, the time of this event, will of itſelf go a great way to prove the divine inſpiration of the prophecies; for it is expreſsly foretold, as we have ſeen, that the converſion and reſtoration of the Jews is to be at a very late or diſtant period, and ſo it muſt be now, though it ſhould happen ever ſo ſoon. Now, how came the ſacred writers to know this? not only to foreſee an event ſo diſtant, but alſo to determine the time when it is to happen ſo nearly, is certainly beyond the power of any human being. But this is not all: How came the ſacred writers to think that the time would be ſo very long? It certainly was not natural for them to think ſo, if they ſincerely wiſhed the ſucceſs of the Goſpel, as who can doubt that they did; for when men ardently wiſh for any event, they are for the moſt part prone to think that it will happen ſooner than it actually does. Of this there are many inſtances among the writers on Daniel and the Revelation, the greater part of whom, through an anxious deſire to ſee the prophecies fulfilled, have in their calculations anticipated the time of their accompliſhment by a great many years. It was not therefore natural for the ſacred writers to put off the converſion of the Jews, or any of the deſirable events which are the ſubject of their prophecies, to ſo great a diſtance, nor would they have done it, had they not been impelled to it by the holy Spirit.

Another circumſtance relative to the converſion of the Jews mentioned by the ſacred writers, is, that it will be ſudden or rapid. They will not be brought in gradually,

dually, or by little and little, but in a body or a great number of them all at a time; agreeably to that of the prophet, Iſaiah lxvi. and 8. "Shall the earth be "made to bring forth in one day, or ſhall a nation be "born at once? for as ſoon as Zion travelled, ſhe "brought forth her children." That this will be the caſe, is probable alſo from the reaſon of things, as the end of Providence in converting and receiving them again into the church, is not only their good, but alſo his own glory and the good of others, the conviction of infidels and ſtrengthening the faith of all true Chriſtians; ſo theſe ends, we imagine, will be more effectually attained by a quick and ſpeedy converſion of that people than by a ſlow gradual one. Their being converted in the former way, will make the wonder the greater, and be more apt to attract the notice and admiration of mankind. Beſides, were the manner of their converſion to be very ſlow and gradual, it would be more difficult or rather impoſſible to aſcertain the preciſe time when this event might be ſaid to take place, and conſequently to ſhew how it agreed with the prophecies concerning it. Thus it is almoſt impoſſible to fix on the preciſe minute when the day may be ſaid to dawn, or the day of the year when the ſummer commences. The ſame may be ſaid of the riſe and fall of Antichriſt; had he grown up inſenſibly, or by a ſlow continued progreſs, or had his fall been in this manner by ſlow imperceptible degrees, it would have been impoſſible to aſcertain the preciſe time of either, and conſequently to tell how long there was betwixt them. But his growth was by ſtarts, only at certain periods, and

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after intervals of ſome length; in other words, he roſe by ſteps, which were made at different times, not but that his power continued to grow betwixt theſe periods, but it was then only that its growth was viſible. Which of theſe ſteps is to be reckoned his riſe, or from which of them the 1260 years of his reign is to be counted, I ſhall not now enquire; but it is probable that the principal ſtep of his fall will correſpond to that of his riſe, that is to ſay, there will be juſt ſo many years betwixt them. The time that the preſent captivity of the Jews was to laſt, is perhaps not to be found in Scripture; but what is equivalent thereto, the time of their converſion is expreſsly ſaid to coincide with the fall of Antichriſt, and his reign is in many places ſaid to be for the ſpace of 1260 days or years. But by the fall of Antichriſt we cannot underſtand all the ſteps of his fall, (for ſeveral of theſe are already paſt, and no converſion has taken place among the Jews as yet), but ſome one remarkable ſtep; but whatever ſpace of time there may be betwixt the ſteps of Antichriſt's fall, the ſteps themſelves, or the blows by which he is brought down, are for the moſt part ſoon over; as, for example, the late revolution in Rome, which is one of the ſevereſt blows he has yet got, was accompliſhed in leſs than half a year, conſequently the converſion of the Jews muſt happen all at once.

Another circumſtance relative to their converſion, is, that it will be preceded or accompanied with ſome ſharp trial or affliction, which God will uſe as the means of it. Indeed the ſpiritual birth of this people will in all probability be accompanied with pangs, both to the church and to the Jews themſelves,

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moſt certainly to the latter. We may infer this from analogy: Affliction is commonly the firſt thing that makes men ſerious, the means that God uſes to bring his people home to himſelf. "I have choſen thee in "the furnace of affliction;" and when we conſider the wickedneſs of the modern Jews, it is hardly to be thought that ever they will truly repent and be converted, till they are made to paſs through ſome ſharp affliction and trial. Beſides, afflictions themſelves have a natural tendency to produce this effect; they make men better, and the better that any one is, the more he will be diſpoſed to receive the doctrine of Chriſt; they humble our pride, and it is not to be doubted, that pride and haughtineſs of heart is one of the principal cauſes of the unbelief of the Jews.

But beſides this, God has expreſsly told us, that their converſion will be brought about in this way: See Ezekiel xx. and 33. to the 38th verſe: "As I live, "ſaith the Lord God, ſurely with a mighty hand, and "with a ſtretched-out arm, and with fury poured out, "will I rule over you. And I will bring you out "from the people, and will gather you out of the "countries wherein ye are ſcattered, with a mighty "hand, and with a ſtretched-out arm, and with fury "poured out. And I will bring you into the wilder-"neſs of the people, and there will I plead with you "face to face. Like as I pleaded with your fathers "in the wilderneſs of the land of Egypt, ſo will I "plead with you ſaith the Lord God. And I will "cauſe you to paſs under the rod, and I will bring "you into the bond of the covenant." It is very poſſible, that the Jews before their converſion may be

be gathered together in a body, ſomewhere here called the wilderneſs of the people, and there meet with ſuch troubles and diſappointments as may ſerve to open their eyes, and to convince them of God's diſpleaſure againſt them for preſiſting in their infidelity. It is poſſible that ſome great conqueror, ſuch as Bonaparte, may offer them his aſſiſtance, as he was ſaid to have done, and that truſting to this, they may aſſemble together ſomewhere, and attempt the recovery of their native country; but failing in this attempt, the diſappointment, and the hardſhips to which they may happen to be expoſed in conſequence of it, may perhaps force them to flee to Chriſt for help, agreeably to that of the prophet, "I will go and return "to my place, till they acknowledge their offence, and "ſeek my face: in their affliction they will ſeek me "early," Hoſea v. and 15. It may ſerve to convince them that it is in vain for them to attempt the recovery of Judea, till they acknowledge their offence, agreeably to the words juſt now quoted, and alſo to theſe of our Saviour, Matt. xxiii. 38. 39. "Behold, "your houſe is left unto you deſolate. For I ſay unto "you, Ye ſhall not ſee me henceforth, till ye ſhall "ſay, Bleſſed is he that cometh in the name of the "Lord."

Farther, that ſome great affliction, trial, or fright, will precede, and be a means of the converſion of the Jews, ſeems alſo to be intimated by a circumſtance mentioned in the hiſtory of Joſeph. His brethren were never truly ſenſible of the injury they had done him, till they were reduced to the ſame diſtreſs which they had occaſioned to him; then they cry out of the evil

evil of their doings, " We are verily guilty concern-
" ing our brother," &c. Gen. xlii. and 21. So it is probable the Jews will never acknowledge their offence, or repent ſincerely of their wickedneſs in crucifying the Saviour, till they are, like Joſeph's brethren, put to a fright, or reduced to ſome very diſtreſſing ſituation, that may force them to flee to Chriſt for help, or that may be attended with ſuch circumſtances, as will effectually convince them of God's diſpleaſure againſt them for continuing to reject the offers of the Goſpel; for Joſeph was an eminent type of our Saviour, as divers learned men have proved; and as every other part of the Patriarch's hiſtory was typical of ſome part of our Saviour's, ſo it is not to be doubted that his revealing himſelf to his brethren was typical of Chriſt's revealing himſelf to the Jews, or of their converſion in the latter days; and therefore it is probable that the manner of the one will reſemble that of the other; that is to ſay, that the Jews will be made to paſs through ſome great trial or affliction immediately before their converſion. Beſides, this part of the Patriarch's conduct towards his brethren, reſembles that of our Saviour's towards the Jews as much as any other.

Joſeph's brethren had treated him in the moſt barbarous manner, and ſold him for a ſlave. To puniſh them for this, when they came into Egypt to buy corn, Joſeph made himſelf ſtrange to them, and ſpake roughly to them, and put them in priſon three days; ſo Chriſt, to puniſh the Jews for their wickedneſs in crucifying him, and continuing to reject his Goſpel, has long hid his face from that people, and treated them

them as enemies. Joſeph's brethren continued long under the guilt of their ſin, before they repented of it, and ſo have the Jews. Joſeph did not reveal himſelf to his brethren till Benjamin, the laſt of the family, was come down; ſo Chriſt will not reveal himſelf to the Jews, his brethren according to the fleſh, till the laſt ages of the world are come. Benjamin was more nearly related to Joſeph than any of his other brethren, being his full brother, or his brother both by father and mother, whereas the reſt were only his half-brethren; ſo the preſent Jews, or the Jews ſince our Saviour's, time are only his half-brethren, his brethren according to the fleſh, but not according to the Spirit; but the Jews in the latter days will be his full brethren. Being converted and renewed by the holy Ghoſt, they will be his brethren according to the Spirit as well as the fleſh, his brethren in reſemblance, in affection, by adoption and regeneration. So that Joſeph's revealing himſelf to his brethren, reſembles our Saviour's revealing himſelf to the Jews in ſeveral reſpects; and when once the event takes place, will probably be ſeen to reſemble it in ſeveral more. The ſuppoſition, that the Jews will on ſome account or other be gathered together into one place before their converſion, accounts alſo for the circumſtance treated of in the preceding ſection, viz. the ſuddenneſs of it: For being all in a body, a converſion once begun will ſpread faſter among them than it could do in their preſent diſperſed ſtate. Mr Mede is of opinion, that their converſion, like that of the Apoſtle Paul's, will be effected by a viſion of Chriſt himſelf, or ſome miraculous appearance in the

heavens; and if this is to be the means, it ſeems neceſſary, in order to give the miracle its proper effect, that the Jews ſhould alſo firſt be collected in a body, that all may ſee it and be convinced by it.

Another circumſtance relative to the converſion of the Jews, is, that their reſtoration will fall out much about the ſame time with it. This appears from Levit. xxvi. and 40. with the following verſes, and ſtill more clearly from the 30th of Deut. at the beginning: "And it ſhall come to paſs when all theſe things are "come upon thee, the bleſſing and the curſe, which "I have ſet before thee, and thou ſhalt call them to "mind among all the nations whither the Lord thy "God hath driven thee, and ſhalt return unto the "Lord thy God, and ſhalt obey his voice," &c. "that "the Lord thy God will turn thy captivity," verſe 5. "And the Lord thy God will bring thee into the "land which thy fathers poſſeſſed, and thou ſhalt "poſſeſs it," &c. Here you ſee their repentance and reſtoration are joined together: See alſo Jeremiah iii. and 14. And in general wherever their captivity and repentance is ſpoken of, there alſo their reſtoration is promiſed; ſo that, according to the tenor of God's covenant with that people, theſe two muſt go hand in hand; and yet, excluſive of the divine promiſe, there is no natural or neceſſary connexion betwixt them. The Jews might be converted without being reſtored as ſome people ignorantly imagine they will be; or they might get poſſeſſion of the land of Canaan without repenting or acknowledging the truth of the Goſpel; or rather they might have got it long ere this time, had it not been for the Providence of God

God hindering it, in order to fulfil the threatenings of his word. " Verily, I ſay unto you, Ye ſhall not " ſee me henceforth," that is, ye ſhall not have my countenance or favour, " till ye ſay, Bleſſed is he " that cometh in the name of the Lord;" or both of theſe events might happen, but not at the ſame time, or they might never happen at all, neither the one nor the other, as I doubt not but many of our infidels think; and therefore, if the converſion of the Jews ſhould be attended with this circumſtance alſo, it muſt be a farther proof of the divine inſpiration of the prophecies. That their converſion will go before their reſtoration, is alſo, I think, clearly aſſerted in Scripture, particularly in the paſſages juſt now quoted. If then their uncircumciſed hearts be humbled, and they then accept of the puniſhment of their iniquity, that is, acknowledge the ſin by which they have provoked God to ſend them into captivity, and alſo his juſtice in ſo puniſhing them, " then will I re- " member my covenant with Jacob," &c. " and I " will remember the land," or, as it is in the parallel place, Deut. xxx. and 3. " Then the Lord thy God " will turn thy captivity, and gather thee from all " the nations whither he hath ſcattered thee." Here you ſee their reſtoration is promiſed only on condition of their repentance, which in their preſent ſtate muſt imply their confeſſing the truth of the Goſpel, or their converſion, and conſequently this muſt go before that. But this point is put out of all doubt by the words of our Saviour, quoted before, " Veri- " ly, I ſay unto you, Ye ſhall not ſee me henceforth, " till ye ſay, Bleſſed is he that cometh in the name

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" of the Lord." And therefore, I cannot but wonder how Mr Bicheno came to deny it.

Another circumſtance, or rather event, mentioned by the ſacred writers as happening at the ſame time with the converſion of the Jews, is the fall of Antichriſt, by which I do not mean the total abolition of Popery, (for that ſeems to be reſerved to the laſt concluding ſcene, or battle of Armagiddon, as we ſhall immediately ſhow,) but ſome great calamity that is to befall the Antichriſtian party, previous to that event, and ſignified in Scripture by the pouring out of the fifth vial on the ſeat of the Beaſt. The word in the original, is the throne of the Beaſt, and may ſignify either the place of his reſidence, which is Rome, with the territory belonging to it, or his power and authority. Mr Mede underſtands it in the firſt ſenſe, and thinks that the deſtruction of the city of Rome, is the thing meant by this vial. Mr Lowman, who underſtands it in the ſecond ſenſe, thinks that this vial means ſome great diminution of the Pope's power, and in this perhaps he is right; but in his application of it to the reformation begun in Germany by Luther, I apprehend he is miſtaken; for the ſeven vials are called the ſeven laſt plagues, in which the wrath of God is filled up, that is, as we ſhall ſhew afterwards, the ſeven laſt ſteps of Antichriſt's fall, or the ſeven laſt judgments of God upon him, by which he is humbled and brought down. But the power of the Pope never began to decline till the reformation; this therefore cannot be the fifth ſtep of his fall, or the thing ſignified by the fifth vial. Though God had ſent many heavy judgments on the Pope and his followers

followers for their wickedneſs, as the ravages of Turks and Saracenes, diviſions, and bloody quarrels among themſelves; yet as none of theſe produced any reformation in religion, ſo neither did they cauſe any diminution of the Pope's power; but, though often humbled, and ſometimes on the very point of being annihilated, he always roſe again in a little time, and was in the very height and fulneſs of his power when the Reformation began. This, therefore, cannot be the fifth ſtep of his fall, or the thing ſignified by the fifth vial. Beſides, the vials are called the ſeven laſt plagues, which ſeems to imply, that Antichriſt had been plagued ſeveral times before any of the vials were poured out upon him; and therefore, in reckoning them, we ought not, as Mr Lowman does, to begin with the firſt of the judgments that befel him after he roſe: Were we to do ſo, and to reckon all the remarkable judgments that have befallen him ſince his power was eſtabliſhed, among the number of the vials, inſtead of ſeven, I am afraid we ſhould reckoned more than twice the number. The vials therefore are to be underſtood only of the ſeven laſt ſteps of Antichriſt's fall, or the ſeven laſt remarkable judgments of God upon him, by which he is weakened and brought down. The Reformation, as we have juſt now ſeen, was the firſt ſtep of Antichriſt's fall; and therefore, all who place the commencement of the vials before this are certainly in the wrong; but whether this is to be reckoned the firſt of them, or they commence at a latter period, is hard to ſay; for I find a great difference of opinion amongſt expoſitors on this part of the Revelation. It is indeed one of the darkeſt

darkeſt paſſages in all that book, probably becauſe, either as to the whole or greater part of it, it ſtill remains to be fulfilled; yet, of all the explications I have ſeen of it, I think Mr Fleming's is the beſt, both becauſe it is fully as rational as any of them, and more than this, his prediction concerning the fall of the French monarchy, partly founded on his explication of this paſſage, has been wonderfully fulfilled. He was of opinion, that the fourth vial would run out about the year 1794, and the revolutions that have happened in Italy ſince that period, have all the appearance of being an accompliſhment of the fifth vial. This, it is ſaid, was poured out on the ſeat, or, as it is in the original, on the throne of the Beaſt; and whether by his throne, we underſtand his place of reſidence, or his power and authority, the judgments which have at this time befallen him, have literally fallen on his ſeat, both his dominions and his power have been greatly abridged. What Bonaparte has done to him, certainly touches him more nearly, and is a greater weakening of his power than any thing that has happened to him ſince the Reformation; and therefore, whether Mr Fleming's method of reckoning the vials be right or not, I am ſtrongly of opinion, that the blow which Bonaparte lately gave to the Pope's intereſt, is indeed an accompliſhment of the fifth vial, or at leaſt a beginning of it. But whatever is of this, that the converſion of the Jews will happen about the time either of the fifth or ſixth vial, is more than probable, and that for the following reaſons:

Firſt, That it will coincide with ſome remarkable ſtep of Antichriſt's fall, is evident from ſeveral paſſages

paſſages of Scripture, as Daniel, chap. xii. 6. and 7. " And one ſaid to the man clothed in linen, " which was upon the waters of the river, How long " ſhall it be to the end of theſe wonders? And I " heard the man clothed in linen, which was upon " the waters of the river, when he held up his right " hand, and his left hand unto heaven, and ſware by " him that liveth for ever, that it ſhall be for a time, " times, and an half: and when he ſhall have accom- " pliſhed to ſcatter the power of the holy people, all " theſe things ſhall be finiſhed." The word accompliſh or finiſh, ſignifies either to perfect and complete a thing, or to make an end of it. Here it cannot be taken in the firſt ſenſe, becauſe the ſcattering or diſperſion of the Jews was complete long ago, and therefore it muſt be taken in the ſecond, and ſhould have been ſo rendered: And when he ſhall have finiſhed, or put an end to the diſperſion of the holy people, or Jews, that is, when they are reſtored, then all theſe things ſhall be finiſhed. Here you ſee the preſent captivity and diſperſion of the Jews, is ſaid expreſsly to end with the time, times, and a half of the Beaſt; at leaſt, theſe two are joined together in ſuch a way, as would lead one to think, that this is the prophet's meaning. Another paſſage to this purpoſe is in the words of our Saviour, Luke xxi. and 24. " And Jeruſalem ſhall " be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times " of the Gentiles be fulfilled." That by the times of the Gentiles, we are here to underſtand the ſame period as that above mentioned, viz. the time, times, and a half of Antichriſt, is evident, elſe why does our Saviour uſe the word in the plural number, call-

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ing it the times of the Gentiles. This way of ſpeaking is altogether unuſual, and unleſs we ſuppoſe that he had an eye to the times of Antichriſt mentioned by Daniel, we will find it impoſſible to account for his expreſſing himſelf in this manner. But what puts it out of all doubt, that by the times of the Gentiles we are to underſtand the times of Antichriſt, is that this place is exactly ſimilar to that of Revelation xi. and 2. "But the court which is without the temple "leave out, and meaſure it not; for it is given unto "the Gentiles: and the holy city ſhall they tread "under foot forty and two months." But this laſt place has always been underſtood of the duration of Antichriſt, and it muſt be ſo. For forty and two months come exactly to three years and a half, which is elſewhere expreſsly ſaid to be the time of Antichriſt's reign. The times of the Gentiles, therefore, are without doubt the ſame with thoſe of Antichriſt; and our Saviour's ſaying, that Jeruſalem ſhould be trodden down till theſe times are fulfilled, evidently implies, that when once they are fulfilled, Jeruſalem ſhall no longer be trodden down, but rebuilt: conſequently, the reſtoration of the Jews, and their converſion, which is inſeparable from it, muſt coincide with the downfall of Antichriſt, or with the end of the 1260 years of his reign.

This is farther probable from analogy, or the nature and reaſon of things: As the fall of ancient Babylon, or the taking of that city by Cyrus, made way for the return of the Jews from their firſt captivity; ſo it is probable, that the fall of ſpiritual Babylon or Rome, will make way for their return from the ſecond,

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or their preſent captivity. The Romans have evermore been the great enemies and oppreſſors of the Jews; they were the cauſe of the preſent diſperſion of that people, and of the deſolation of their country; and it is they that have all along perſecuted them, and by their cruelty to them have prejudiſed them againſt Chriſtianity; and therefore the downfall of this tyranical power muſt be a deliverance to them, and in all likelihood make way for their converſion and reſtoration; and as when the Jews were caſt off, the Romans were taken in, ſo when theſe are caſt off, the Jews will be taken in. The Apoſtle ſeems to hint as much in the xith of his Epiſtle to the Romans, where, ſpeaking of the Jews, he ſays, "Well; becauſe of unbelief they "were broken off, and thou ſtandeſt by faith. Be "not high-minded, but fear." From all which, eſpecially the paſſages above mentioned, it is evident, that the converſion of the Jews will coincide with the downfall of Antichriſt, that is, with ſome remarkable ſtep of his fall; for as Popery roſe by ſteps, ſo it is probable that it will fall in like manner by ſteps; and when we ſay, that the converſion of the Jews will coincide with the fall of Antichriſt, our meaning is, that it will coincide with ſome of theſe ſteps, or ſome extraordinary calamity that is to befall him; and a very extraordinary one it muſt be, ſeeing it it conſidered by the Holy Spirit abſolutely as his fall, and the 1260 years of his duration are made to terminate with it. But it is not the laſt ſtep of his fall, or final overthrow; for that the converſion of the Jews will happen before this, or before the pouring out of

the ſeventh vial, appears from the following argument:

Firſt, It is agreed by all, that at the pouring out of this vial, all the enemies of the church are to be deſtroyed, and the Millennium immediately to take place; but from the xxxviii. and xxxix. chapters of Ezekiel, it is evident that the Jews are not only converted, but reſtored and ſettled again in their own land, when Gog goes forth againſt them with a great and powerful army, and is overthrown by the immediate hand of God: conſequently this deſtruction of Gog muſt either happen at the pouring out of the ſeventh vial or before it; becauſe at the pouring out of this vial, all the remaining enemies of the church are deſtroyed, and the 1000 years of peace and happineſs begin, during which the church has no enemies. Therefore, ſome place this expedition of Gog at the end of the Millennium, ſuppoſing that it is the ſame with that mentioned in the xxth of the Revelation, or that the Gog of Ezekiel is the ſame with that of John; but in this they certainly are miſtaken, for in Ezekiel's prophecy, the Jews, when Gog ſets out againſt them, are repreſented as newly returned from captivity: "In the latter years thou ſhalt come into the land "that is brought back from the ſword, and is gather-"ed out of many people," &c. Ezek. xxxviii. 8. and 12. But it is abſurd to ſuppoſe, that the Jews will not be converted and reſtored till the end of the Millennium or near it, as muſt be the caſe, if they are but newly reſtored when after the Millennium Gog invades them; for to what purpoſe ſhould they be reſtored

ſtored then, when the conſummation of all things is juſt approaching. In that caſe there would be no Millennium for them, or, at beſt, but a very ſhort one; whereas it is ſaid in Scripture, that when the Jews are converted, they ſhall enjoy a long time of happineſs and proſperity: So Iſa. lx. and 15. "Where-"as thou haſt been forſaken and hated, ſo that no man "went through thee, I will make thee an eternal "excellency, a joy of many generations." See alſo Ezek. xxxvii. 25.

Beſides, if the Jews are not converted till near the end of the Millennium, then they muſt have lived during the greater part of that time in a ſtate of infidelity and enmity to the Goſpel, which is wholly inconſiſtent with the notion Scripture gives us of the Millennium; for then it is ſaid, "There ſhall be one "Lord, and his name one," Zech. xiv. and 9. That all nations ſhall ſerve him, and be bleſſed in him, Dan. vii. and 14. and Pſal. lxxii. 11. and 17.; which could not be true, if ſo great a nation as the Jews were, during all that time, of a different religion, and without the ſaving knowledge of Chriſt. But this notion is ſo inconſiſtent with the promiſes of Scripture, concerning the glory of the latter days, and the happineſs which the Jews are then to enjoy, that it is needleſs to inſiſt upon it. Beſides, I have already ſhewn, that the Gog of Ezekiel is no other than the great Turk, and alſo that moſt, if not all of the powers that are mentioned by Ezekiel as joining with him in his expedition againſt the Jews, are at preſent of the Mahometan religion, as he himſelf alſo is; which makes it probable, that both he and they are

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alſo of this religion at the time of that expedition; and indeed it is not to be ſuppoſed, that any but Mahometans, Papiſts, or Pagans, would join with him in it; but it is not likely that there ſhould be either Mahometans or Papiſts in the time of the Millennium, much leſs after it, or that either the Turkiſh empire, or any of theſe religions ſhould laſt ſo long: conſequently the Gog of Ezekiel cannot be the ſame with the Gog in the xxth of the Revelation, and his expedition againſt the Jews muſt be either at the beginning of the Millennium, that is, at the pouring out of the ſeventh vial or before it. What confirms this, is, that it is ſaid, Ezek. xxxviii. 16. that the end of Providence in bringing Gog and his vaſt army againſt the Jews, is for the conviction of the Heathen, or that it may be a means of bringing them over to the true religion: "And I will bring thee againſt my land, "that the Heathen may know me when I ſhall be "ſanctified in thee, O Gog, before their eyes;" conſequently the world is not as yet all converted to the Chriſtian faith, viz. when Gog's expedition againſt the Jews takes place. This expedition therefore muſt be, as I ſaid, either at the beginning of the Millennium or before it: but it is evident from the account that Ezekiel gives of it, that the reſtoration of the Jews is to happen ſome conſiderable time before it; for they are there repreſented not only as returned to their own land, but as ſettled in it, dwelling ſafely in unwalled villages, having neither gates nor bars, which ſhews that they had been ſettled for ſome little time, but not long.

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From all which it is evident, that the converſion of the Jews is to happen before the commencement of the Millennium, or the pouring out of the ſeventh vial. Another proof of this is, that in the laſt chapter of Daniel towards the end, there are three different periods of time mentioned, at the end of which, ſomething great, and for the good of the church is to happen, viz. 1260 days; 2dly, 1290; and 3dly, 1335 days. The end of the firſt is to be the fall of Antichriſt, as is clear from many other places of Scripture. The end of the laſt is the commencement of the Millennium; and what the end of the ſecond ſhould be, but the converſion or reſtoration of the Jews, I cannot ſee. And that this is indeed the great event that is to happen at the end of the ſecond period, is farther probable from another paſſage in the viiith chapter, which has ſuch a reſemblance to this in the xiith that it cannot be doubted that they both refer to the ſame event, and that the numbers mentioned in both places, end preciſely at the ſame time. The words in the xiith chapter and 11th verſe are: "And from the time "that the daily ſacrifice ſhall be taken away, and "the abomination that maketh deſolate ſet up, there "ſhall be a thouſand two hundred and ninety days." And in chapter viii. verſe 13. one angel puts this queſtion to another, "How long ſhall be the viſion "concerning the daily ſacrifice, and the tranſgreſſion "of deſolation, to give both the ſanctuary and the "hoſt to be trodden under foot?" The anſwer to this is given in the next verſe: "And he ſaid unto me, "Unto two thouſand and three hundred days; then "ſhall the ſanctuary be cleanſed." In both theſe paſſages,

ſages, you ſee the ſame events are prophecied of, and almoſt in the ſame words. In both, mention is made of the daily ſacrifice; in the one, viz. Daniel xii. 11. it is ſaid to be taken away; in the other, viz. chapter viii. 13. this is evidently to be underſtood, as appears by comparing it with the 11th verſe of the ſame chapter: the tranſgreſſion of deſolation in the one place, anſwers exactly to the abomination that maketh deſolate in the other; and therefore there can be no doubt that the periods mentioned in both terminate in the ſame point of time, although being of very different lengths, they muſt, for this reaſon, have different beginnings. But in chapter. viii. verſe 14. it is ſaid, that when the 2300 days are ended, then ſhall the ſanctuary be cleanſed: conſequently, if by cleanſing the ſanctuary we are to underſtand the reſtoration of the Jews, this muſt be the great event that is to happen at the end of the 1290 days, as well as of 2300. And that this is the meaning of the phraſe, I ſhall now endeavour to ſhew. The word ſanctuary may be taken either literally or metaphorically.

Firſt, Literally, either for the temple at Jeruſalem, the place which God in ancient times choſe for his public worſhip, or, what is much the ſame, for the city of Jeruſalem itſelf, which in Scripture is often called the holy city; or for the whole land of Judea, which was in ancient times the reſidence of God's peculiar people, who were ſeveral times in this very book called the holy people, as the land is ſtill called the holy land. It may alſo be ſtyled the ſanctuary, becauſe in every part of it, God was worſhipped by prayer, and other acts of private devotion, as he was

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in the temple by ſacrifice, and other acts of public worſhip. If we take the word in this laſt ſenſe, or indeed in any of theſe ſenſes, by cleanſing the ſanctuary we muſt underſtand God's caſting out, by ſome ſpecial act of his Providence, the Mahometans and other enemies of the true religion out of Judea, and reſtoring it to his ancient people, when converted and reformed.

2dly, By the ſanctuary we may underſtand the Chriſtian church, or the Chriſtian world at large; for the ſanctuary is any place where God is worſhiped according to the inſtitutions of his word, and by cleanſing the ſanctuary, we may underſtand the caſting of idols, idolatrous Papiſts, and all Pagan rites and practices out of the church. This will be literally a caſting the buyers and ſellers out of the temple; for Popery is nothing elſe but a traffic or merchandizing, and that too of the moſt iniquitous kind; a ſelling of benefices and church-offices, or of trinkets and trifles, receiving good hard money for pardons, indulgences, maſſes, hallowed beads, and things literally worſe than nothing. If we take the words in the firſt ſenſe, the end of the 2300 days, and alſo of the 1290, will be when the Jews are converted and reſtored, that is, before the ſeventh vial is poured out, as has been already proved. If we take them in the latter ſenſe, then the end of theſe times or periods will not be till the pouring out of the ſeventh vial, when all the enemies of the church are to be deſtroyed; for till then the Chriſtian ſanctuary can never be ſaid to be thoroughly cleanſed. But at the pouring out of this vial, it is generally thought that the

the Millennium will take place: And indeed the words of our Saviour ſeem to imply as much; for immediately after that, there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven from the throne, ſaying, It is done. But if we make the end of the 1290 days coincide with the ſeventh trumpet, or the beginning of the Millennium, What great or good event ſhall we place at the end of the 1335 days? Therefore, I rather incline to take the words literally, to ſignify the clearing of the holy land of Turks, Mahometans, &c. and giving it to his choſen Iſrael, now become indeed a holy people. And yet there ſeems to be no neceſſity for ſuppoſing that the Millennium will begin immediately after the ſeventh vial. Our Saviour's ſaying, It is done, may ſignify no more but that the church's troubles are now at an end, and her deliverances compleated; but it does not follow, that her meaſure of poſitive happineſs is then full, or that there are no new bleſſings to be added afterwards. The contrary ſeems very probable; for as the domineering of Antichriſt, I mean of both the Pope and Turk over the church, has been a great hinderance to the ſucceſs of the Goſpel; a means of hardening both Mahometans and Pagans in their infidelity; ſo, till the final overthrow of theſe two oppreſſors take place at the pouring out of the ſeventh vial, it is probable there will ſtill be a great many, both Mahometans and Pagans, in the world. After that, indeed, the Goſpel will have free courſe, and be glorified. Men being convinced by God's judgments on his enemies, will come in crowds into the church, or, as Iſaiah beautifully expreſſes it, "will "flee as clouds and as doves to their windows;" but

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ſtill it muſt take a time to inſtruct, convert, and civilize all the nations, which till that time will probably remain in an unconverted ſtate. The deſtruction of the two Antichriſts, I mean the Turk of Rome and him of Conſtantinople, is only a clearing of the ground. After that is done, ſome time muſt be allowed for raiſing the building, and leſs I think cannot be granted than that which I ſuppoſe is here allotted for it by the Holy Spirit, viz. 45 years; for this is preciſely the difference between the ſecond and third period mentioned by Daniel. When theſe 45 years are elapſed, then, and not till then, we may ſuppoſe that the Millennium will begin; for though war will probably ceaſe before this, that is, immediately after the final overthrow of Antichriſt, yet till all the world is converted to the Chriſtian faith, the Millennium cannot properly be ſaid to begin; neither till then is the world fit or worthy to receive thoſe other great bleſſings, which are mentioned in Scripture as eſſential to the Millennial ſtate.

But to return to our ſubject whence we have digreſſed, viz. the time of the converſion of the Jews: That the vials mentioned in the xvth of the Rev. denote the ſteps of Antichriſt's fall, or rather the judgments of God, by which he is brought down, is generally agreed on by interpreters, and is evident from what is there ſaid of them, and the effects aſcribed to them. They are called the ſeven laſt plagues, and in them the wrath of God is ſaid to be filled up or completed: The firſt cauſes a noiſome and grievous ſore to the men that have the mark of the Beaſt, and that worſhip his image: The fifth is

poured out on the ſeat of the Beaſt; and upon the effuſion of the ſeventh, it is ſaid, the great city was divided into three parts, and great Babylon came into remembrance before God. And though Antichriſt is not mentioned by any of his ordinary titles in the other vials, yet it cannot be doubted that all of them belong to the ſame ſubject, viz. the fall of Antichriſt, either in the eaſt or weſt.

I have already ſhewn, that the converſion of the Jews will coincide with ſome of theſe vials, or ſome remarkable ſtep of Antichriſt's fall. But the three laſt vials are the moſt remarkable, and bring the ſoreſt, heavieſt judgments on the enemies of the church. It muſt therefore be one of theſe that is meant by the Holy Spirit. It cannot be the ſeventh or laſt, becauſe it has been already proved, that the converſion of the Jews is previous to the pouring out of this vial. It muſt therefore be either the fifth or ſixth. The firſt of theſe brings on the deſtruction of Rome, or ſome great calamity that is to befall the Antichriſtian party in the weſt, as the other does the humbling of the Turk, who is the great oppreſſor of the eaſtern church, and one of the chief ſupporters of the Mahometan religion. Which of theſe two events the converſion of the Jews will coincide with, is perhaps a queſtion that cannot be ſolved, till the farther accompliſhment of the prophecies throw more light upon them. Daniel indeed tells us, chapter xii. 7. that the reſtoration of the Jews will take place at the end of the time, times, and a half; which are ſaid, chapter vii. 25. to be the time that Antichriſt or the little horn is to domineer over the weſtern church:

church: but perhaps the ſame period is allotted by Providence for the duration both of the eaſtern and weſtern Antichriſt; for it would ſeem that the time, times, and a half, mentioned in the xiith chapter, are to be underſtood of the duration of Mahometaniſm, and of the fall of the Turkiſh empire, as thoſe in the viith chapter are to be underſtood of the duration and fall of Popery, becauſe the ſix laſt verſes of the preceding chapter are wholly taken up in treating of the affairs of the Turk, and the chapter concludes with his fall; and therefore, when in the ſixth verſe of this chapter we find one angel aſking another, How long it ſhould be to the end of theſe wonders? it is natural to think, that the time mentioned in the anſwer ends where the preceding chapter ends, that is, with the fall of the Turk; and if ſo, then the reſtoration of the Jews will coincide with this event.

It is probable, however, that their converſion will coincide with the fifth vial, and their reſtoration with the ſixth: That as the idolatry, and perſecuting ſpirit of the church of Rome, has been the great hinderance to the converſion of the Jews, ſo this event will coincide with the fall of the Papacy; and as the Turk's being in poſſeſſion of the Holy land is the hinderance to their reſtoration, ſo this will coincide with his fall. It is probable alſo, that as the fifth vial does not cauſe the total overthrow of the Popiſh party, for the deſtruction of the Beaſt is mentioned afterwards, ſo neither does the ſixth vial cauſe that of the Turk, and that the final deſtruction of both theſe powers is reſerved till the ſeventh vial. Moſt interpreters are of opinion, that as Popery and Mahometaniſm

hometaniſm roſe much about the ſame time, ſo they will fall together; and I do think it probable, that the final overthrow of both will be preciſely at the ſame time, viz. at the pouring out of the ſeventh vial; but it appears to me, that before this, each of them will have a ſeparate fall, the one ſignified by the fifth vial, and the other by the ſixth. With reſpect to the Roman Antichriſt, this is clear from Scripture, Rev. xvi. 10. "And the fifth angel poured out his vial on "the ſeat of the Beaſt," &c. which certainly means ſome great calamity that is to befall him. Indeed ſo great is the calamity ſignified by this vial, that, as we ſaid before, it is conſidered by the Holy Spirit abſolutely as his fall: Although it appears from what follows, that he is never wholly deſtroyed, and that there is a remnant of Popery ay until the ſeventh vial or battle of Armageddon. It is alſo clear from what Mr Mede and others have ſaid upon it, that the ſixth vial is to bring down the Turks; but whether their empire will then be totally overthrown, or only humbled and brought low, is not ſo eaſy to determine. The laſt appears to me the moſt probable of the two, and that for the following reaſons:

Firſt, As Mahometaniſm reſembles Popery in many reſpects, in the oppoſition of its doctrines to thoſe of the Goſpel, in its bloody tyrannical ſpirit, oppreſſing the church and keeping her in ignorance and ſlavery, in its riſe, which was much about the ſame time with that of Popery, and in the wideneſs of its dominion and long duration, ſo it will probably alſo reſemble it in its fall; that is, it will fall by ſteps, at leaſt there will be more than one ſtep in the fall thereof.

2dly,

2dly, It has been already ſhewn, that the Jews are to be reſtored before the final overthrow of the Turks; but how this can be, how the Jews can get poſſeſſion of the Holy land, until the Turks, who have it at preſent in their hands, are humbled, I cannot ſee. It is probable, therefore, that in order to make way for the reſtoration of the Jews, ſome great revolution will take place in the Turkiſh empire at the pouring out of the ſixth vial, ſimilar to that which happens in the kingdom of the Beaſt at the pouring out of the fifth. Some time after this, as I ſuppoſe, when the Jews are ſettled, and living in peace in their own land, the Turk, having recovered the blow given him by the ſixth vial, will invade them with a great and powerful army, as appears from Daniel, xith chap. 44. 45. verſes, and Ezek. xxxviii. xxxix. chapters. At which time, the Pope, or the Antichriſtian powers in Europe, with a great many nations more, are to join with him. Then comes on that battle mentioned, Rev. xvi. 14. commonly called the battle of Armageddon, and the battle of that great day of God Almighty, wherein all the enemies of the church are to be deſtroyed. For I ſuppoſe, that the battle of Gog and of Armageddon, as alſo that deſcribed, Rev. xix. from the 11th verſe to the end, are all one. My reaſons for thinking ſo are, firſt, That the battle deſcribed in each of theſe places is deſcribed in ſuch terms, repreſented to be ſo exceeding great, that as there has never yet been, ſo it is not probable there will ever be again any equal or like to it, a circumſtance that agrees only to one battle. In all the three places, the ſacred writers ſpeak

as if the whole world, or all the kings of the earth, were to be engaged in the battle which they deſcribe; which, though it is not perhaps to be underſtood literally, yet certainly means ſuch a number, as makes it very improbable that two or more ſuch battles ſhould happen within a few years of one another, as muſt be the caſe if thoſe deſcribed in the above paſſages are diſtinct battles; for that the diſtance of time betwixt them, if there is any, cannot be great, we ſhall ſhow by and by. But,

Firſt, Something farther muſt be ſaid, to ſhew that the battle deſcribed by the ſacred writers in theſe three places, is repreſented by them to be ſo exceeding great as we have ſaid, and that they agree in this circumſtance. With reſpect to two of the places this is clear, viz. Rev. xvi. from the 13th to the 17th verſe, and Rev. xix. from the 17th verſe to the end. In the firſt of theſe places, "I ſaw," ſays the inſpired writer, "three unclean ſpirits like frogs," &c. "They are the ſpirits of devils which go forth un- "to the kings of the earth, and of the whole world, "to gather them to the battle of that great day of "God Almighty." Here you ſee the greatneſs of this battle is aſſerted in the ſtrongeſt poſſible terms, and ſo it is alſo in that of the xixth of Rev. 17th and 18th verſes, where it is called the ſupper of the great God, and all the fowls of the air invited to come and eat thereof. With reſpect to that war or battle deſcribed in the 38th and 39th of Ezek. although its greatneſs is not aſſerted in ſuch ſtrong terms, yet there are other circumſtances in that prophecy which ſufficiently prove it. For,

Firſt,

Firſt, This is one of the longeſt prophecies, and abſolutely the longeſt deſcription of a battle that is to be found in any part of Scripture, whether hiſtorical or prophetic; conſequently there muſt be ſomething very important in this battle, that the Holy Spirit dwells ſo long upon it.

2dly, We have a liſt of the nations or parties concerned in it, from which it appears to be an exceeding great battle, as great at leaſt, as any recorded in hiſtory, and great enough, along with other circumſtances, to make it probable that it is the ſame with that deſcribed in the other two places above mentioned; for as to the expreſſion of St John, the kings of the earth, and of the whole world, I take it to be an hyperbole, as it is not eaſy to conceive how all the kings of the earth could literally be engaged in any battle, or even war; yet it certainly means, that the number of theſe kings was to be exceeding great: And in this battle of Gog's, there are alſo ſo many great and powerful nations engaged, as may well juſtify the hyperbole uſed by the Apoſtle, ſuppoſing him to treat of the ſame ſubject; for beſides Gog himſelf, or the great Turk, who is one of the moſt powerful monarchs in the known world, there is the great kingdom of Perſia, Cuſh, or the Arabians, who are a vaſt nation, Lybia, or the ſtates of Barbary, Gomer, and all his bands, in which phraſe there are, without all doubt, a great many nations comprehended. Gomer was the eldeſt ſon of Japhet, and as is generally thought, the father of moſt of the nations that peopled Europe; ſo that by Gomer, and all his bands, we are to underſtand at leaſt

all

all the powers of Europe that are ſubject to the Pope, or that may from wickedneſs or want of principle, think fit to join with the Turk on this occaſion; and from what has lately happened in Europe, and elſewhere, there is reaſon to fear, that more of the Princes of Europe will do ſo than moſt people will perhaps at preſent believe.

Laſtly, To complete this formidable combination of the kings of the earth, comes the houſe of Togarma, of the north quarters, and all his bands. Who theſe may be, I do not pretend to know; but taking all together, here is ſuch a multitude of nations and kingdoms, as never in all probability met together before in one army, or even battle; which, as we ſaid before, makes it probable, that this is the ſame with that mentioned Rev. xvi. 14. Another proof of this, is the agreement of theſe battles in reſpect of time. That in the xvith of the Revelations, is immediately after the pouring out of the ſeventh vial, that of Gog in the 38th and 39th chapers of Ezekiel, is ſome little time after the reſtoration of the Jews, which muſt happen either at the fifth or ſixth vial, moſt probably at the latter, as I have already ſhewn.

3dly, The indentity of the battles mentioned, Rev. xvi. and xix. chapters is generally admitted: See Fleming's diſcourſe on the riſe and fall of the Papacy, page 51. And that the battle deſcribed in the laſt of theſe two places, is the ſame with that of the 38th and 39th of Ezekiel, is farther probable from the ſameneſs of the expreſſions uſed in both places. The words of Ezekiel, chapter xxxix. 17. are, "And "thou ſon of man, Thus ſaith the Lord God, Speak

"unto

" unto every feathered fowl, and to every beaſt of " the field, Aſſemble yourſelves and come, gather " yourſelves on every ſide to my ſacrifice that I do " ſacrifice for you, even a great ſacrifice upon the " mountains of Iſrael, that ye may eat fleſh, and " drink blood. Ye ſhall eat the fleſh of the mighty, " and drink the blood of the princes of the earth: " Thus ſhall ye be ſatisfied at my table." To which the words of John exactly agree: " And I ſaw an " angel ſtanding in the ſun; and he cried with a loud " voice, ſaying to all the fowls that fly in the midſt of " heaven, Come and gather yourſelves together unto " the ſupper of the great God; That ye may eat the " fleſh of kings, and the fleſh of captains," &c. Hence, I ſay, it is probable, that the battle deſcribed in theſe two places is the ſame; and conſequently the ſame alſo with that of Rev. xvi. 14. But,

4thly, What puts this matter out of all doubt, is, that all theſe three battles are ſpoken of as final and deciſive of the conteſt betwixt the church and her enemies. In the xvith of Rev. after the powers leagued againſt her are gathered together at Armageddon, the ſeventh angel pours out his vial into the air, upon which a voice from the temple proclaims, " It is " done." In like manner, that the battle in the xixth of Rev. is final, appears clearly from what is ſaid in the two laſt verſes, viz. " That the beaſt and the " falſe prophet were both of them taken, and caſt a- " live into the lake burning with fire and brimſtone. " And the remnant were ſlain with the ſword that " proceeded out of the mouth of Chriſt," conſequently here is an utter end of all the enemies of the church. Accordingly the next chapter begins with

the Miſſennium. And that the battle in the 38th and 39th of Ezek. is alſo final, appears from what is ſaid in the 39th chap. 21. verſe to the end. "And I will "ſet my glory among the heathen, and all the hea- "then ſhall ſee my judgments that I have execut- "ed." verſe 28. "And the heathen ſhall know that "the houſe of Iſrael went into captivity for their i- "niquity," &c. All which I think evidently implies, that by God's judgments upon Gog, and the nations that are leagued with him, all the world ſhall be convinced and turn to the Lord: And if ſo, then there will be no more oppoſition to the intereſt of Chriſt in the world; no more war, nor miſchief, at leaſt, till the thouſand years are finiſhed; conſequently this battle of Gog's muſt be conſidered as final and deciſive. What confirms this is the following words, verſe 29. "Neither will I hide my face any more "from them: for I have poured out my ſpirit upon the "houſe of Iſrael, ſaith the Lord God." If this opinion holds, that is, if the battle in the 38th and 39th of Ezek. is the ſame with that of Armageddon, then the place or ſcene of this battle is not in the territory of the See of Rome, where Mr Mede and others place it, but ſomewhere in the land of Paleſtine, for there it is where Gog is to be deſtroyed, according to that of the prophet Ezek. xxxix. 4. "Thou ſhalt fall upon "the mountains of Iſrael, thou and all thy bands." As to the particular ſpot where this battle is to be fought, though it cannot perhaps be known with certainty, yet there are probable reaſons for thinking that it will be ſomewhere in, or near to the valley of Megiddon, which lies to the eaſt of the ſea of Tiberias.

Firſt,

Firſt, Becauſe the name ſeems to countenance this opinion, Armageddon being evidently compounded of the Hebrew, Har, a mountain, and Megiddon Megiddo. This derivation is at leaſt as good as any other; and though we do not read of any mountain of this name, yet we find the valley of Megiddon ſpoken of in ſeveral places of Scripture, and wherever there is a valley, there muſt alſo be ſome mountain or riſing ground.

2dly, It addeth not a little to the probability of this opinion, that the name of the place is expreſſed by an Hebrew word, as if it were to come to paſs in the land of the Hebrews.

3dly, The prophet himſelf ſeems to place it there, viz. at Megiddon, Ezek. xxxix. 11. "And I will "give unto Gog a place there of graves in Iſrael, the "valley of the paſſengers on the eaſt of the ſea," &c. which by the Chaldee paraphraſe is rendered the ſea of Ginoſar, that is, Geneſareth or Tiberias, and there the valley of Megiddon is.

4thly, There is the great plain of Eſdraelon, anciently called Jezreel, the largeſt of any in that country, and conſequently the fitteſt for ſuch a battle, and the encampment of ſuch a vaſt army as that of Gog. For theſe reaſons, it ſeems more than probable, that the ſcene of this battle will be where we have placed it. And here we cannot help obſerving how wonderful the agreement betwixt the ſacred writers is. In treating of the ſame ſubjects, they not only ſay the ſame things, but in words ſo different, as plainly ſhews that they did not copy from one another, nor had any intention of confirming each others authority. Ezekiel places the ſcene of this battle to the eaſt of the

the ſea of Tiberias, and John places it at Armageddon, or near Megiddo, which lies a little to the eaſt of that ſea. The reader will alſo obſerve, that the agreement betwixt Ezekiel and John, with reſpect to the place of the battles which they have deſcribed, is another proof that they are both the ſame. It appears alſo, that the ſlaughter of the enemies of the church, repreſented in the three laſt verſes of the xivth of Rev. by the emblem of treading the great wine-preſs of the wrath of God, is the ſame with that great ſlaughter mentioned in the xixth chapter; for the ſame emblem is uſed in this laſt chapter as in the former: verſe 15. "And he treadeth the wine-preſs "of the fierceneſs and wrath of Almighty God:" Conſequently it will be the ſame alſo with that of Gog and of Armageddon. Now, in that paſſage of the xivth of Rev. it is ſaid, "And blood came out "of the wine-preſs, even unto the horſe bridles, by "the ſpace of a thouſand and ſix hundred furlongs;" which agrees exactly to the dimenſions of the holy land, it being juſt ſo many furlongs in the length thereof, i. e. 200 Italian miles: See Mede in locum. Hence it appears, that though the principal ſcene in this battle will probably be where we have ſaid, yet the carnage will not be confined to that ſpot, but will, either, in the battle itſelf, or in purſuing the victory extend over the whole country. To this interpretation Mr Mede has ſuggeſted two or three ſmall objections.

Firſt, It is not likely, ſays he, that the beaſt, his affairs at home in the weſt being in ſuch ſtate and danger, ſhould lead an army into Paleſtine, leaving ſo many

many enemies at his back, and there at length be utterly aboliſhed. But why in ſuch ſtate and danger? This is a mere ſuppoſition. But admitting it to be a juſt one, the Pope's affairs being in a dangerous or deſperate ſtate in the weſt, ſeems rather a good reaſon for his removing eaſtward and joining with Gog, as in the above interpretation we have ſuppoſed him to do.

2dly, He objects that the fore-mentioned ſpace of a thouſand ſix hundred furlongs agrees with the dimenſions of the Papal dominions; but as he confeſſes that it agrees alſo to thoſe of the holy land, this fact gives no help to the ſolving of the queſtion, whether the final overthrow of Antichriſt ſhall be in Italy or Paleſtine.

3dly, Whereas the wine-preſs is ſaid to be trodden without the city, Mr Mede thinks this implies that it ſhall be in the region or dominion of the city; and as Rome was at that time the chief city in the known world, and is the principal ſubject of this prophecy, it is natural to think that it is the city here meant; and if ſo, then this ſlaughter muſt be not in Paleſtine, but in the Pope's dominions. In anſwer to this, it may be ſaid, that the word city does not always mean a city properly ſo called, or the houſes and walls of a town, but both in this prophecy, and other good authors, is often uſed to ſignify the community at large, the ſtate, power, and whole juriſdiction thereof; ſo it ſeems to be uſed, Rev. xi. 8. where, ſpeaking of the witneſſes, the ſacred writer ſays, "And "their dead bodies ſhall lie in the ſtreet of the great "city." Mr Mede takes great pains to ſhew, that the word here rendered ſtreet, cannot mean what is commonly

commonly ſignified by that name, but the whole region or territory ſubject to the dominion of the city. Certain it is, that either by the city or ſtreet thereof, the whole region or territory ſubject to the city, that is, the whole Popiſh empire, is here intended; for if we take the words in any lower ſenſe, how could they of the people, and kindreds, and tongues, ſee the dead bodies of the witneſſes, as is ſaid in the following verſe.

2dly, It is to be thought, as Mr Mede obſerves, that the bodies of the witneſſes lie in the place where they are overcome in battle; but it is not the cuſtom for armies to encounter within the walls of a city; therefore, by the city, we muſt underſtand the whole Popiſh empire. Another place where the city ſignifies the whole Popiſh dominions or empire, is that of Rev. xi. 13, where it is ſaid, "And the tenth part "of the city fell," which moſt of our modern writers on that book, underſtand of the late Revolution in France, and in my opinion not without reaſon, for this kingdom was not only one of the ten horns of the Beaſt, or a tenth part of his dominions, but literally the tenth, that is, the laſt of the ten kingdoms into which the old Roman empire was divided, reckoning them according to the order of time, or as they ſprung up. In this ſenſe alſo the word city is underſtood by Mr Mede himſelf in Rev. xvi. 19. "And "the great city was divided into three parts, and the "cities of the nations fell." And in this ſenſe it muſt there be underſtood, if his opinion, which I think very probable, be true, viz. that before the event there ſignified, Rome will be deſtroyed. He thinks that

that the fifth vial, which is poured out on the ſeat of the Beaſt, means the deſtruction of Rome; but what is ſaid of the city's being divided into three parts, happens long afterwards, namely, at the ſeventh vial; and conſequently the great city cannot mean Rome properly ſo called, but muſt ſignify the dominion or government thereof, not the ſeat of the Papacy, but the Papacy itſelf *. Here then we have three places in this very book, where the word city does not ſignify the city properly ſo called, but the whole dominion or empire of the Pope; and conſequently nothing hindereth why it may not be ſo underſtood in that of Rev. xiv. 20. the ſenſe of which we are now endeavouring to inveſtigate. Taking the word therefore in this ſenſe, without the city, will ſignify without the limits of the Popiſh empire or juriſdiction, and ſo the holy land or mountain of Megiddo actually is.

That this therefore is the place where the wine-preſs is to be trodden, is at leaſt exceeding probable; for beſides the foregoing arguments, which do in a great meaſure prove it, if the fifth vial means the deſtruction of Rome, as it probably does, then the treading of the wine-preſs, which does not happen till ſome time after, namely, at the ſeventh vial, cannot with propriety be ſaid to be without the city, when the city, properly ſo called, by this time is no more. Beſides, it is doubtful whether the city of Rome can with propriety be ſaid to be the principal ſubject of this prophecy, I ſhould rather think that

* He that would ſee more proofs of this, may conſult Jurieu, page 262.

that Chriſt and the church are the principal ſubjects, both of this and of all the other books of Scripture. The church too is often repreſented to us in Scripture under the notion of a city, as Iſaiah xxvi. 1. "We have a ſtrong city, ſalvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks;" and Heb. xii. 22. It is called Mount Zion, the city of the living God, it is called the Holy city, Rev. xi. 2.; and in the two laſt chapters of that book we have a glorious deſcription of a city, which, as all agree, muſt either ſignify the church on earth or in heaven. Without the city, therefore, may ſignify without the pale of the church. Mr Fleming, who underſtands the phraſe in this ſenſe, places the battle of Armageddon, or the treading of the wine-preſs, in the territory of the See of Rome, whereby it is evident, that he looked on that territory as without the pale of the church; but this I think is ſtraining hard to make out a point; for why ſhould the territory of the See of Rome be reckoned without the church more than other Popiſh countries; beſides, the church of Rome has for the moſt part been conſidered by Proteſtants as a church, though a degenerate one. But let us examine Mr Fleming's own words, and ſee if they will lead us to any thing; for though he has miſſed the ſenſe of the paſſage, yet I imagine he has ſuggeſted it: His words are, page 51. Without the city, viz. of Jeruſalem, or the church, ſeeing this is called the city in Scripture-ſtyle, as Rome is called the great city. He would have done much better had he taken Jeruſalem in the literal ſenſe; for the mountains of Iſrael, and the valley of Megiddo, where Scripture places the battle

of

of Gog or of Armageddon, are literally without Jeruſalem; and as Jeruſalem will be rebuilt, and Rome probably deſtroyed before that battle takes place, (for as we have ſhewn before it does not happen till after the reſtoration of the Jews), Jeruſalem will then be the chief city on earth. To this we may add, that without the city ſeems to imply, that this battle will be in the neighbourhood thereof; for how abſurd would it be to ſay, that ſuch a battle was fought without the city of Edinburgh, when perhaps it was fought at the diſtance of 100 miles from it. It is probable, therefore, that the treading of the wine-preſs will be ſomewhere not far from the city of Jeruſalem. This ſeems to be confirmed by the following paſſages, Zech. xii. 2.—10. and chapter xiv. 2.—15.

Another proof that the treading of the wine-preſs is to be in the land of Judea is this. It appears by comparing that paſſage in the lxiii. of Iſaiah, "Who "is that cometh from Edom," &c. with that in the ſixth of Rev. that they both relate to the ſame event, viz. the laſt great victory of the church over her enemies.

Firſt, The battle or victory deſcribed in both, is expreſſed by the ſame metaphor, viz. that of treading the wine-preſs; and not only ſo, but ſeveral other phraſes are exactly ſimilar. In the xixth of Rev. 15. it is called the wine-preſs of the fierceneſs and wrath of Almighty God, and in the other paſſage it is ſaid, "I will tread them in mine anger, and trample "them in my fury." Anger and fury are preciſely the ſame with fierceneſs and wrath, and might have been ſo tranſlated.

2dly, The perſon who treads the wine-preſs is the ſame in both places, viz. Chriſt. With reſpect to the xixth of the Rev. this is clear from verſe 13. In the other paſſage, viz. the lxiii. of Iſaiah, though the name of Chriſt is not expreſsly mentioned, yet from innumerable paſſages of the Old Teſtament it is evident, as I have elſewhere ſhewn, that beſides God the Father, there is another Divine perſon to whom God has committed the government of this lower world, and who has been in all ages the Head, patron and defender of the church, called in the 9th verſe of this very chapter the angel of God's preſence. To whom then ſhould we aſcribe the glory of this victory but to him that is, to Chriſt.

3dly, In both places he is repreſented as arrayed in the moſt gorgeous manner, and yet his garments all ſtained with blood. St John ſaith, "And on his "head were many crowns, and he was clothed with "a veſture dipt in blood:" and Iſaiah, "Who is "this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments "from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel," and verſe 3. "Their blood ſhall be ſprinkled upon "my garments, and I will ſtain all my raiment."

4thly, The battle deſcribed in both places is ſpoken of as uncommonly bloody, great and important as the deliverance of the church, and deciſive of the controverſy betwixt her and her enemies. In the one place the time of it is called the day of vengeance, and the year of God's redeemed; and in the concluſion of the other we are told, that the Beaſt, and the falſe prophet were taken, and both caſt alive into the lake of fire and brimſtone.

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From all which it is evident, that the battle and victory deſcribed in both places is the ſame; but the victory deſcribed by Iſaiah is evidently gained by Chriſt on behalf of the Jews, or it is for their ſake that he interpoſes in this battle; for it is of them that he ſpeaks, when, in the 4th verſe of this chapter, he ſays, "the year of my redeemed is come," as appears by comparing this verſe with the laſt of the preceding chapter. It is therefore for the Jews, and on their behalf, that the great battle in the xixth of the Rev. is to be fought, ſince we have ſhewn that this battle and that of Iſaiah are both one. But if it is on behalf of the Jews that the battle in the xixth of the Rev. is fought, the time of it muſt be after their reſtoration, as we cannot conceive how any battle can be fought, or victory obtained, either by them or for them, while they are in their preſent diſperſed ſtate. And if it is after their reſtoration that that battle is fought, then it ſynchroniſes or falls in with the time of that in the 38th and 39th of Ezekiel, which, as we have already ſhewn, happens alſo ſome little time after their reſtoration, but the ſcene of this battle we have proved to be in the land of Judea conſequently that deſcribed by Iſaiah, and that in the xixth of the Rev. muſt be there too.

Another proof that the battle deſcribed by Iſaiah in the paſſage juſt now mentioned is the ſame with that in Ezekiel, is that as the latter is expreſsly ſaid to be in the laſt days, after the Jews are reſtored, Ezek. xxxviii. 8. 11. ſo the former is introduced immediately after a remarkable prophecy concerning the redemption of that people, which, though it may perhaps

perhaps have an eye to their deliverance from the Babyloniſh captivity, yet from the magnificent things that are ſaid of it, it is ultimately and chiefly to be underſtood of their redemption from the captivity which they are now under.

Thus it appears, that after the Jews are converted and ſettled again in their own land, there is to be a combination of the Mahometan and Antichriſtian powers againſt them, on purpoſe to diſpoſſeſs them, or to conquer and plunder them, which will bring on a battle ſomewhere in the land of Judea, the iſſue of which will be the complete deliverance of the church and deſtruction of her enemies; and though in the eyes of ſome people, it may ſeem needleſs to have dwelt ſo long upon an event which it muſt be confeſſed is ſtill at a conſiderable diſtance, yet I think myſelf juſtifiable in ſo doing, firſt, by the example of the holy Spirit, who has been pleaſed to reveal ſo much concerning it to us, for there is not in all the prophetic writings an event more frequently and largely treated of than this, except it be the firſt and ſecond coming of our Saviour, and the riſe and fall of Antichriſt, of which laſt this event is one of the principal ſteps. Ezekiel, as we have ſeen, has two long chapters upon it. It is ſpoken of at leaſt in three different places of the Revelation, viz. chap. xiv. 20. chap. xvi. 16. chap. xix. 11. verſe to the end. By Iſaiah in the paſſage juſt now quoted, alſo chap. xiv. 24. 25. By Daniel in the xi. chap. and two laſt verſes. Micah iv. and three laſt verſes. Haggai ii. 22. Zech. ix. 12. verſe to the end, and chap. xii. 9.

2dly,

2dly, I think myſelf juſtifiable for ſaying ſo much on this event by the great importance of it. It is indeed the moſt important event that the church has to expect till the ſecond and glorious appearance of the Son of God unto Salvation, and therefore it is that the Holy Spirit has treated ſo largely of it. It is the laſt deciſive ſtruggle that the church is to have with her enemies, that is to put an end to her troubles, and to introduce that happy ſtate, when there is to be no more war, nor miſchief for the ſpace of a thouſand years. Beſides, what I have ſaid upon this event is not without its uſe; for, in the firſt place, in treating of it I have explained a good many paſſages of Scripture, which to the bulk of readers muſt formerly have appeared very dark and myſterious; and ſurely the time is not unprofitably ſpent that is ſpent in explaining and ſtudying the holy Scriptures. Indeed, a right underſtanding of this event, with that of the Millennium, which is conſequent upon it, is the key to innumerable places of Scripture, for almoſt all the prophets treat of it particularly towards the end of their books.

3dly, What I have ſaid concerning this event may help to prevent or correct ſome dangerous miſtakes with reſpect to it; for as the Scriptures make the battle of Armageddon to coincide with the final overthrow of Antichriſt, and as Antichriſt is falling daily, I make no doubt, but there are many people who look upon theſe events as juſt at the door; and ſhould it fall out otherwiſe, or ſhould Antichriſt yet get up again, it might be apt to ſtumble them. But from what has been ſaid, it appears that the battle of Armageddon,

mageddon, in which Antichriſt is finally to periſh, is not to happen till ſome time after the converſion and reſtoration of the Jews; and therefore we muſt not look on the late revolutions in Rome and Italy, as the fatal blow that is to put an end to the exiſtence of the Pope, or as the laſt ſhow of the Beaſt, but only as one of the ſtrokes by which he is humbled and brought down. It is indeed in my opinion a fulfilment of the fifth vial, and the principal ſtep of the Pope's fall; but there are two vials ſtill to come, and as the fifth brings down the Pope, ſo the ſixth, which is poured out on the Euphrates, according to moſt interpreters humbles the Turk, and the ſeventh completes the deſtruction of both. Mr Fleming agrees with me in thinking that the ſixth vial means the fall of the Ottoman empire; but we differ in this, that whereas he thinks, that it cauſes the total deſtruction of that empire, I am of opinion, that it means only a weakening of it, not its annihilation, but ſome great calamity that is to happen to it. I have already given my reaſons for this opinion, and ſhall not repeat them, but only add, that if I am miſtaken, i. e. if the ſixth vial means the final overthrow of the Turk, then it muſt coincide with the battle of Gog, mentioned in the 38th and 39th of Ezek. for that battle, as we have ſeen, finiſhes the empire of the Ottomans. But if the battle of Gog coincides with the ſixth vial, it cannot be the ſame with that of Armageddon, as I have endeavoured to prove, but muſt go before it, for the battle of Armageddon coincides with the ſeventh vial, as all agree. But the reſtoration of the Jews goes before the battle of Gog; and therefore if this is not

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ne ſame with the battle of Armageddon, there muſt be two vials to run, and two great battles betwixt the church and her enemies after the reſtoration of the Jews: but, as I obſerved before, it is not likely that two ſuch extraordinary battles, as theſe are, in Scripture, repreſented to be, ſhould happen within ſo ſhort a time of one another. However it may be ſo. There is one thing that favours Mr Fleming's opinion, and that is, at the pouring out of the ſixth vial it is ſaid, "and the waters of the Euphrates were "dried up," which ſeems to imply, that the thing ſignified by theſe waters would be totally deſtroyed. Still the reaſons before mentioned incline me to the other opinion, namely, that the ſixth vial means only ſome great calamity that is to befal the Ottomans, and makes way for the reſtoration of the Jews; and that the battle of Gog, which comes after their reſtoration, is the ſame with that of Armageddon, and completes the deſtruction of all the Antichriſtian powers. Whether Mr Fleming or I is in the right as to this point, time will probably very ſoon diſcover.

But if the reſtoration of the Jews coincide with the ſixth vial, and the ſixth vial cauſe the total overthrow of the Turks, as the words, Rev. xvi. 12. and Iſa. xi. 15. (which is parallel thereto, as Mr Mede has ſhewn,) ſeem to imply, then the Gog who afterward invades them muſt be ſome other power than the Ottoman. Mr Bicheno, who is of this opinion, thinks that it is the Ruſſians and Muſcovites; that theſe having conquered the Turks, which they are indeed very likely to do, they will, with the aſſiſtance of their newly-acquired ſubjects, together with the Perſians

Perſians and other nations enumerated by Ezekiel, invade the land of Judea. His reaſons for this opinion are:

Firſt, He thinks that the Turkiſh empire muſt be overthrown before the Jews can be reſtored, conſequently the Gog that invades them after their reſtoration cannot be the Turk. In ſupport of this opinion, he quotes alſo the words of Daniel, chap. xii. 1, where, immediately after deſcribing the fall of the Turk, he adds, "And at that time ſhall Michael "ſtand up, the great prince which ſtandeth for the "children of thy people, and there ſhall be a time "of trouble, ſuch as never was ſince there was a nation, even to that ſame time; and at that time "thy people ſhall be delivered, every one that ſhall "be found written in the book. And many of them "that ſleep in the duſt of the earth ſhall awake," &c. This he interprets (as he and others have done), Ezekiel's viſion of the dry bones, of the reſtoration of the Jews, of their being delivered from the hands of their enemies, raiſed to political life, and becoming a free and happy people in the enjoyment of their ancient inheritance.

But I have already ſhewn, that the total overthrow of the Turkiſh empire is not neceſſary to the reſtoration of the Jews, and as to that paſſage in the 11th of Daniel, which he interprets in favour of his opinion, it is more natural I think to underſtand it of the reſurrection, either firſt or ſecond, and ſo the moſt part of commentators have interpreted it. Another reaſon that Mr Bicheno adduces to prove that Gog is the power of Ruſſia, is taken from the titles which

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ave given him by the prophet. He is ſtyled Chief Prince of Meſech and Tubal; or, as it is in the margin of our Bibles, Prince of the Chief of Meſech and Tubal; but the word in the original for Chief is Roſh, which is very probably a proper name, ſo it may be rendered Prince of Roſh, Meſech and Tubal, and is ſo rendered by the ſeventy. He ſhews alſo, that the Muſcovites are deſcended from Meſech, and makes it probable that the Ruſſians are deſcended from Tubal; ſo the prince of Roſh, Meſech, and Tubal, may ſignify the prince of Ruſſia and Muſcovy. All this is ſo far good, Roſh is the Ruſſians, and Meſech is the Muſcovites; but what becomes of Gog himſelf? Why is the Emperor of the Ruſſians called by this name, and the land of Magog? what connexion has it with Ruſſia? Mr Bicheno is ſilent as to theſe points. Beſides ſome of the facts that he makes uſe of to ſupport his opinion, are, I think, rather againſt it. He ſhews, and that clearly, that Meſech and Tubal ſettled originally in Cappadocia and Armenia, and that in this laſt country there was alſo in ancient times a people called Roſh or Roſſi. Now is it not natural to think, that Ezekiel, in uſing theſe names, meant the nations that were called by them in his time, rather than thoſe that are ſo called now, and which are but the offspring of the other, or that he meant the parent countries rather than the colonies; but the parent countries are at preſent all ſubject to the Turk, therefore he is Gog.

Another proof of this is, that Gog or Magog, as Mr Bicheno acknowledges, is generally eſteemed the father of the Scythians, and the Turk is of Scythian

extract, as all agree. But what puts it out of all doubt that the Turk is Gog, is the reſemblance there is betwixt the character and the final overthrow of the Turk, as deſcribed by Daniel, chap. xi. 44, 45. and that of Gog, as deſcribed by Ezekiel. The ſituation of both is the ſame: In Daniel, the Turk is ſtyled the king of the north, chap. xi. 40. and in Ezekiel Gog is ſaid to come out of the north parts, chap. xxxviii. 15. Both are deſcribed as having the ſame people for their ſubjects or allies. In Daniel xi. 43. it is ſaid of the Turk, "And the Lybians and Ethi-"opians ſhall be at his ſteps:" and Ezekiel xxxviii. 5. "Lybia and Ethiopia are reckoned among the na-"tions that fight under Gog's banner." Both are repreſented as going out of their place with great fury to invade the land of Judea, and there meeting with their final doom. The place referred to in Ezekiel we have already conſidered, that in Daniel is as follows: "But tidings out of the eaſt, and out of the "north ſhall trouble him: therefore he ſhall go "forth with great fury to deſtroy, and utterly to "make away many. And he ſhall plant the taber-"nacles of his palace," or, as it may be rendered, the tents of his camp, "between the ſeas in the glo-"rious holy mountain; yet he ſhall come to his end, "and none ſhall help him." Tidings out of the eaſt probably means tidings that the Jews have taken poſſeſſion of the land of Canaan, which is one of the principal provinces of the Turkiſh empire; and therefore the fear of loſing it muſt needs trouble the court at Conſtantinople. This ſuppoſition accounts alſo for the Turks going forth with ſuch fury to invade

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that country. " And he ſhall plant the tents of his " camp between the ſeas in the glorious holy moun- " tain." By this, Mr Bicheno underſtands the Turks making Conſtantinople, which is ſituate between the Black ſea and the Mediterranean, the capital of his empire: See page 86th of his book. But this interpretation does not agree with the context. For,

Firſt, The Turk, or the perſon here ſpoken of, is ſaid to go forth, that is, from his place of reſidence, as is natural to think, to pitch his camp elſewhere; but Conſtantinople is his place of reſidence, and therefore cannot be the glorious holy mountain, where he is ſaid to pitch his camp.

2dly, It is the cuſtom of the ſacred writers, particularly of Daniel, to call their own country and people by ſuch honourable titles: See chap. ix. 24. and viii. 24. vii. 27. and xii. 7. and twice in this very chapter, viz. verſes 16. 44. Judea is called the glorious land, and chapter ix. 16. Jeruſalem is called God's holy mountain, which are the very titles here uſed; ſo that there can be no doubt, that by the glorious holy mountain we are to underſtand the land of Judea. Here the Turk is to make his exit, and here alſo, as we have already ſeen, Gog is to be overthrown.

Laſtly, The time of the deſtruction of both theſe powers is the ſame; that of Gog in Ezekiel is ſpoken of as happening after the reſtoration of the Jews, and that of the Turk in Daniel, as immediately preceding the firſt reſurrection; for after ſpeaking of the fall of the Turk in the end of the xith chapter, he immediately adds in the beginning of the xiith, " And at " that

" that time ſhall Michael ſtand up," &c. to the end of the 3d verſe. That theſe words are to be underſtood of the firſt, and not of the ſecond reſurrection, is at leaſt very probable, becauſe they are introduced immediately after the fall of the Turk; and the Millennium is ſpoken of afterwards in the 12th verſe; but the ſecond reſurrection does not happen till after the Millennium. The overthrow of the Turk therefore coincides with that of Gog, both as to time and place, and conſequently theſe two are the ſame.

I have already ſaid, that I conſider the late revolution in Rome as a fulfilment of the fifth vial, as I am fully perſuaded that it is; but whether it is to be conſidered as the beginning or end of that vial, I am not quite ſo certain. It is the opinion of Mr Mede, that the burning of Rome is to happen during the time of the fifth vial; and if ſo, then the late revolution in Italy was probably only the beginning of that vial, and the deſtruction of Rome will be the end of it. And as the firſt of theſe events happened in the year 1797, ſo it is not unlikely that the laſt of them may be in the year 1812, which anſwers to the year 552, which Mr Fleming conſiders as a notable ſtep in the riſe of the Beaſt.

That Rome will one day be utterly deſtroyed by fire, is indeed clear from the xviiith of the Revelation; but whether this event belongs to the fifth or ſixth vial is ſomewhat doubtful; becauſe after the deſcription that is given of it in the xviiith chapter, and the rejoicings of the ſaints on account of it in the beginning of the xixth, the ſacred writer immediately introduces the marriage of the Lamb; and then,

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from the 11th verſe to the end, we have an account of the laſt great battle betwixt Chriſt and his enemies, which, as appears from Rev. xvi. 14. is to happen at the ſeventh vial; ſo that betwixt the burning of Rome and this vial there is no remarkable event here ſpoken of, but the marriage of the Lamb; no mention of the deſtruction of Gog, or of the waters of the Euphrates, or ſeemingly of any thing relative to the ſixth vial, which makes it probable, that the burning of Rome, and the marriage of the Lamb are both after the ſixth vial, or during the time of it. Beſides theſe three events, the burning of Rome, the marriage of the Lamb, and the laſt great battle, are here ſo cloſely connected, and ſucceed one another ſo rapidly, that as there is no intervening event mentioned, ſo there ſeems to be no room for admitting any; and therefore it would ſeem, that the ſixth vial is poured out or begun before any of theſe events happen. Thus, in the beginning of the xixth chapter, the church's rejoicings on account of the deſtruction of Babylon, and her rejoicings on account of the approaching marriage of the Lamb, are blended together; which ſeems to imply, that theſe two events are cotemporary, or rather that the one follows immediately on the other; and as the marriage of the Lamb is cloſely connected with the fall of Babylon, ſo the laſt great battle, or battle of Armageddon, ſeems cloſely connected with the marriage of the Lamb. In the 9th verſe it is ſaid, "Bleſſed are they that are "called to the marriage-ſupper of the Lamb;" and in the 17th verſe, the battle of Armageddon is called the ſupper of the great God. Now, the Lamb is our Saviour, and our Saviour is the great God; and there-

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fore the marriage-ſupper of the Lamb, and the ſupper of the great God muſt ſignify the ſame thing. There is therefore ſo cloſe a connexion betwixt theſe three events, the deſtruction of Babylon, the marriage of the Lamb, and the battle of Armageddon, that there ſeems to be no room for admitting the fall of the Turk, which is the chief thing ſignified by the ſixth vial in amongſt them; neither, as we ſaid before, is there any mention here made of ſuch a thing. It would ſeem, therefore, that this event is paſt before any of the other three takes place. But this argument, if it proves any thing it proves too much, for in the whole paſſage where theſe events are treated of, viz. the xvii. xviii. xix. chapters of the Rev. the ſacred writers makes no expreſs mention of the ſixth vial, or of the fall of the Turk, neither before his deſcription of Babylon's deſtruction nor after it; and if his ſilence in the one place proves that the fall of the Turk is not to happen after Babylon's deſtruction, then his ſilence in the other muſt alſo prove that it is not to happen before it, and ſo it will not happen at all; and yet it is certain from Rev. xvi. 12. not to mention other places, that the fall of the Turk is an event that will happen ſome time or other; and therefore the ſacred writers making no mention of the ſixth vial, or of this event, betwixt the deſcription which he gives us of the deſtruction of Babylon, and of the laſt great battle, does not prove that this event is not to happen then; and yet perhaps the fall of the Turk is not wholly omitted here more than it is elſewhere, but is couched under the marriage of the Lamb. Indeed this is more than probable; but before

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we can ſhew that it is ſo, we muſt firſt inquire what is meant by the marriage of the Lamb.

By this metaphor moſt interpreters think, we are here to underſtand the converſion and reſtoration of the Jews, and that this is the meaning of it muſt be admitted, if we conſider firſt, that it is not likely that ſo great, ſo deſirable an event, and one which is ſo often ſpoken of by all the other prophets, and inſpired writers, both of the Old and New Teſtament, would be omitted by John in a prophecy, that contains all the remarkable or principal events that were to happen to the church, from the Apoſtles time, down to the end of the world: But there is no part in all the Revelation that can be applied to this event but the paſſage juſt now mentioned, and that other in the xvith chapter, where it is ſaid, "And "the waters of the Euphrates were dried up, that "the way of the kings of the eaſt might be prepared," which Mr Mede and ſome others think, is to be underſtood of the return of the Jews; and though perhaps in this they are right, yet that paſſage is ſo ſhort, dark, and uncertain as to its application, that I cannot think it is the only place in the Revelation where ſo great, important, and deſirable an event is taken notice of; eſpecially when it is conſidered, that all the other great events propheſied of in this book are mentioned again and again, and many that are of leſs importance than this. It is probable, therefore, that this is the thing meant by the marriage of the Lamb. Beſides, Mr Fleming, with great appearance of reaſon, underſtands that of the xvith chapter, concerning the kings of the eaſt, literally of the kings

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or nations that lie to the eaſt of the Euphrates, who, being moſtly Mahometans, a way for their converſion will be prepared by the fall of the Turk; and if this is the meaning, then that other paſſage concerning the marriage of the Lamb, is the only one in all the Revelation that can be underſtood of the converſion of the Jews; and therefore it muſt be ſo underſtood. However, Mr Mede ſupports his opinion by very ſtrong arguments; and therefore I am inclined to underſtand that of Rev. xvi. 12. both ways, of the converſion of the Jews, as well as of the other eaſtern nations, and the more ſo, that I find moſt of the great events contained in the Revelation are twice treated of, and ſome of them oftener.

2dly, That by the marriage of the Lamb, we are to underſtand the converſion and reſtoration of the Jews, is farther probable from this, that the ſtyle of the prophecies, particularly of this book, is highly metaphorical, and there is no metaphor by which that event could be expreſſed more properly, than that which the ſacred writers here uſe, the marriage of the Lamb; for what is marriage but a ſolemn contract and agreement betwixt a man and a woman, wherein the former binds and obliges himſelf to love, ſupport, and provide for the latter, and the latter to love, reverence, and obey the former? and does not Chriſt enter into a like covenant with all true believers at their converſion? does he not promiſe and engage to protect, ſupport, and provide for them, to love, and cheriſh them, and to beſtow on them all things neceſſary to their preſent comfort and future happineſs? and do not they, on their part, engage to be faithful

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and conſtant to him, to love him above all creatures and created enjoyments, and to yield a ſincere and univerſal obedience to his laws; and as the marriage-covenant is a laſting and indiſſoluble one, which no thing but death can break, ſo is the covenant betwixt Chriſt and believers, it is an indiſſoluble tie, an everlaſting covenant, which cannot be broken even by death itſelf.

The converſion of any one, therefore, whether an individual or a nation, from a ſtate of infidelity to that of a true and ſincere faith, may very properly be called their marriage with Chriſt. Accordingly the Apoſtle Paul uſes the metaphor in this ſenſe, 2 Cor. xi. 2. "For I have eſpouſed you to one huſ-"band, that I may preſent you as a chaſte virgin to "Chriſt:" and in the Old Teſtament, God's covenant with his antient people, is often repreſented under this notion; ſo Jer. iii. 14. "Turn, O backſlid-"ing children, ſaith the Lord, for I am married un-"to you;" and Iſa. liv. 5. "For thy maker is thine "huſband, (the Lord of hoſts is his name:") ſee alſo Hoſ. ii. 19. and many other places. The marriage of the Lamb, therefore, in all probability, means the converſion of ſome great and powerful nation to the Chriſtian faith, for we cannot think thatthere has ever been ſince the Apoſtles days, or ever will be to the end of the world, any individual of ſuch conſequence as to merit a place in this prophecy, which treats only of the moſt important events, and ſuch as are of general concern to the church. It muſt, therefore, as I ſaid, be underſtood of ſome great nation, a nation remarkable on ſome account or other, either of their

character, hiſtory, antiquity, the great things done by them or for them by Providence, or on ſome account or other; and what nation is there ſo remarkable in all reſpects as the Jews? a nation ſo ancient, ſo honourable, ſo nearly related to Chriſt, that there is not any on earth comparable to them; a nation once high in the Divine favour, and though now of a long time they have been caſt off, and held as enemies for the ſake of the Gentiles; yet, as touching the election, they are beloved for the ſake of their fathers, a nation that is the ſubject of innumerable other propheſies, both in the Old and New Teſtament; and therefore probably alſo of this.

It cannot be underſtood of any of the Gentile nations that have been long ſince converted to Chriſtianity, for the event here treated of is evidently ſtill future, being placed immediately before the laſt great battle betwixt the church and her enemies; and as Mr Mede obſerves, unleſs the Jews are converted before that battle, they muſt then be deſtroyed along with the other enemies of Chriſt, in that day of univerſal revenge and judgment. From all which, it is more than probable, that by the marriage of the Lamb, we are here to underſtand the converſion of the Jews; and what farther confirms this is, that this marriage is deſcribed as cauſing great joy to the church on earth: "Let us be glad and rejoice, and "give honour to him, for the marriage of the Lamb "is come, and his wife hath made herſelf ready." And doubtleſs the converſion of God's ancient people will do ſo, as much as any event ever did ſince the Apoſtles days: St Paul tells us, "it will be as life "from the dead," and Iſaiah ſpeaking of it, chap. lxvi.

lxvi. 10. says, "Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be "glad with her, all ye that love her:" &c.

Having now proved, that by the marriage of the Lamb, we are to understand the conversion, and restoration of the Jews, we proceed to shew, that the sixth vial, or fall of the Turk, is cotemporary therewith, and is couched under this promise concerning it. This will not need much proof, for, as the Turk is at present in possession of the land of Palestine, it is evident the Jews cannot be restored till he is humbled, either totally overthrown, or so much weakened as not to be able to hinder their return. These two must go hand in hand, and therefore it is probable, that his fall, or the sixth vial, is comprehended under the marriage of the Lamb, as being inseparably connected with it. Now, the marriage of the Lamb comes in exactly betwixt the burning of Babylon and the last great battle, which is to be at the seventh vial; and therefore, if the burning of Babylon be to happen at the end of the fifth vial, the marriage of the Lamb must be betwixt the fifth and seventh vials, which is just where the same Apostle, chap. xvi. places the sixth vial, or fall of the Turk; consequently these two, the fall of the Turk, and the marriage of the Lamb or restoration of the Jews, must be cotemporary, and both happen during the sixth vial. On the other hand, if the restoration of the Jews be during the sixth vial, then the burning of Rome must be at the end of the fifth; for as the sixth vial begins just where the former ends, so the marriage of the Lamb, or restoration of the Jews, follows immediately after the burning of Rome. This last e-

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vent goes first, and is described at great length in the xviiith chapter; then follows the marriage of the Lamb, chapter xix. 7. which is expressed in these words: "The marriage of the Lamb is come;" that is, the event signified by this metaphor, the long-looked for restoration of the Jews is now about to take place, after which, at some little distance, comes the marriage-supper. By the marriage, I understand the home bringing of the bride, or the return of the Jews to Canaan, for their conversion, I imagine, goes before this, and is expressed in these words: "and his wife "hath made herself ready;" that is, by her repentance and acknowledgement of the truth, by fleeing to Christ, and believing on him, the great obstacle to her restoration, namely, God's displeasure with her on account of her infidelity is now removed, or she is now prepared, and endued with the qualifications requisite to her restoration. Her uncircumcised heart is humbled she has acknowledged her offence, and accepted the punishment of her iniquity, therefore God's wrath towards her is appeased, her sin is pardoned, and consequently the effects of it, her present exile and wandering state are now shortly to come to an end; or to speak in the metaphorical style of the Apostle, "She has now consented to the match, and given "her hand to Christ; therefore, she shall be brought "home with joy and gladness to the palace of the "king, to Judea, which was once the peculiar resi-"dence of the Almighty, and where he will yet dwell "among his ancient people, and be their God." The homebringing of the bride was in ancient times the principal part of the marriage-ceremony; and there-

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fore I take it, the return of the Jews to their native country is the chief thing ſignified by the marriage of the Lamb; and if ſo, then by the bride's having made herſelf ready, we muſt underſtand ſomething previous to their return; and what ſhould that be, but their converſion to Chriſtianity? and as this is ſaid immediately after the deſcription of Babylon's fall, and is ſpoken of as a thing then paſt, or in the preterite, "his wife hath made herſelf ready;" it would ſeem, that the converſion of the Jews goes before that event, or is at leaſt cotemporary with it. Their marriage, or reſtoration, ſucceeds immediately to their converſion, and the deſtruction of Babylon; and after that, at ſome little diſtance, comes the battle of Armageddon, or marriage-ſupper, which is ſo called, becauſe it follows ſoon after the marriage as the ſupper does, and will be a feaſt to the church, particularly to the Jews, as being a great manifeſtation of God's ſpecial care of them and love to them, and deliverance from the hand of a great and powerful enemy, that was come for their deſtruction.

It will alſo be matter of joy to the churches of the Gentiles, as being a clear demonſtration of the truth of Scripture, and a ſure pledge of the happy times that are there ſpoken of as ſucceeding to this event. It will be in a ſpecial manner matter of joy to ſuch of the Gentiles as ſhall have joined themſelves to the Jews, or been aſſiſting to them at that time. Therefore it is ſaid, "Bleſſed are they that are called to the marriage-ſupper of the Lamb;" or it may perhaps mean, Bleſſed are they who are deſtined to ſee that happy day, who ſhall be then upon the earth,

earth, or outlive the preceding troubles, and ſo it anſwers to thoſe words of Daniel, chapter xii. 12. "Bleſſed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thou-"ſand three hundred and five and thirty days."

After this deciſive battle the Goſpel will flee like lightning over the world; the nations, being convinced by God s judgments on Gog, will come over in crowds to the ſtandard of Chriſt. Immediately the Jews will begin their operations as miſſionaries, and will carry the light of the Goſpel to the remoteſt corners of the earth. After all the world is converted, which I ſuppoſe will not take up above 45 years after the fall of Gog, then, and not till then, will the happy Millennium commence. Wherein the happineſs of that period will conſiſt, we cannot poſitively ſay; but the following particulars ſeem clear from Scripture.

Firſt, The world will all be of one religion, viz. the pure religion of the New Teſtament, Popery and Mahometaniſm and idolatry will be utterly extirpated. There will be one Lord, and his name one, over all the earth.

2dly, There will be a great increaſe of light and knowledge, eſpecially in matters of religion; the prophecies, being all fulfilled, will then be as clear as any other parts of Scripture, for the event is the beſt interpreter of prophecy; beſides, the Spirit being poured out in an extraordinary meaſure, as is expreſsly promiſed, Joel ii. 28. will lead men to the meaning of many places that have never yet been diſcovered. It is ſaid, Rev. x. 7. that when the ſeventh angel ſhall begin to ſound, the myſtery of God ſhall be finiſhed,

finiſhed; which plainly implies, that the myſteries both of Scripture and of Providence will then be by ſome means or other explained. The winding up of the great drama of Providence, which will take place at the commencement of the Millennium, will explain all the preceding acts, and ſhew the beauty and ſymmetry of the whole ſcheme.

3dly, It will be a time of great holineſs and piety. Virtue and true religion ſhall every where prevail, and all iniquity and vice as aſhamed ſhall hide its face. How much this will contribute to the happineſs of that period may be eaſily conceived; for let us only ſuppoſe, that in the preſent ſtate of things all were juſt and reaſonable in their dealings, that there were no thieves, quarrelſome or inſidious perſons, but that all would live in peace and love, and walk by our Saviour's rule, do to others as they would wiſh others to do to them, what a happy world would it be in compariſon of what it is? Yet this will be preciſely the caſe in the time of the Millennium. Thy people ſhall be all righteous, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified, Iſa. lx. 21.

4thly, It will be a time of univerſal peace. "The "nations ſhall beat their ſwords into plough-ſhares, "and their ſpears into pruning-hooks. The wolf "alſo ſhall dwell with the lamb, and the lion ſhall "eat ſtraw like the ox. They ſhall not hurt nor "deſtroy in all my holy mountain," Iſa. xi. 6.

From this, and from another paſſage in the 65th chapter of Iſaiah, it would appear, that during that happy period, there will be few or none of the human race carried off by accidents or premature death. "There

" There ſhall be no more thence an infant of days, " nor an old man that hath not filled his days, for " the child ſhall die an hundred years old; they ſhall " not build, and another inhabit; they ſhall not plant, " and another eat." In the preſent ſtate of things, the wars, diſeaſes, and calamities that ſhorten mens lives are ſo many, that thoſe who build, plant, or make any improvement, ſeldom live to enjoy the fruit of their labours. But in that happy period it ſhall be otherwiſe, the ſame hand that ſowed ſhall reap the field. It would appear alſo from the following words, that the length of human life will be conſiderably enlarged: " For as the days of a tree, ſhall the days of " my people be, and mine elect ſhall long enjoy the " work of their hands."

5thly, There will be a bleſſing on the earth and on the ſeaſons, which will render them uncommonly fruitful: So Joel iii. 18. " And it ſhall come to paſs " in that day, that the mountains ſhall drop down " new wine, and the hills ſhall flow with milk." And Amos ix. 13. " Behold, the days come, ſaith the " Lord, that the ploughman ſhall overtake the reap- " er, and the treader of grapes, him that ſoweth " ſeed; and the mountains ſhall drop ſweet wine, " and all the hills ſhall melt." There will be a particular bleſſing upon the land of Judea, as appears from Ezek. xxxiv. 25. " And I will make with them a co- " venant of peace, and will cauſe the evil beaſts to " ceaſe out of the land: and they ſhall dwell ſafely " in the wilderneſs, and ſleep in the woods. And I " will make them and the places round about my " hill, a bleſſing; and I will cauſe the ſhower to come

" down

" down in his ſeaſon: there ſhall be ſhowers of bleſ-
" ſing." So alſo Ezek. xxxvi. 33. " Thus ſaith
" the Lord God, In the day that I ſhall have cleanſ-
" ed you from all your iniquities, I will alſo cauſe
" you to dwell in the cities, and the waſtes ſhall be
" builded. And the deſolate land ſhall be tilled,
" whereas it lay deſolate in the ſight of all that paſ-
" ſed by. And they ſhall ſay, This land that was
" deſolate is become like the garden of Eden," &c.
But the fineſt deſcription of the happineſs of the Jews
after their reſtoration, is contained in the following
paſſages of Iſaiah, chap. xlix. 11th to the 24th verſe.
" And I will make all my mountains a way, and my
" highways ſhall be exalted. Behold, theſe ſhall
" come from far: and lo, theſe from the north and
" from the weſt, and theſe from the land of Sinim.
" Sing, O heavens, and be joyful, O earth, and
" break forth into ſinging, O mountains: for the Lord
" hath comforted his people, and will have mercy
" upon his afflicted." And chapter liv. 11. " O thou
" afflicted, toſſed with tempeſt, and not comforted,
" behold, I will lay thy ſtones with fair colours, and
" lay thy foundations with ſapphires. And I will make
" thy windows of agates, and thy gates of carbuncles,
" and all thy borders of pleaſant ſtones. And all
" thy children ſhall be taught of the Lord, and great
" ſhall be the peace of thy children. In righteouſ-
" neſs ſhalt thou be eſtabliſhed: thou ſhalt be far
" from oppreſſion, for thou ſhalt not fear; and from
" terror, for it ſhall not come near thee." See alſo
the lxth of Iſaiah, the whole of which ſeems to be a
prophecy of the happy ſtate of God's ancient people

during the Millennium, although in ſeveral places it ſeems to have an eye to the heavenly ſtate.

In the preceding pages we have endeavoured to ſhew, that the time of Antichriſt's fall and of the converſion of the Jews is near; but as we have not yet ſaid how near, or ſhewn by any clear demonſtrative proof when theſe events are deſtined to happen, we ſhall now try if it is poſſible to do this, or if we can find any paſſages in the propheſies, or facts in hiſtory, that will enable us to determine the time of Antichriſt's fall with more certainty and preciſion. Two things chiefly encourage me to make this inquiry: Firſt, Several writers of acknowledged piety have done the like, and what is more, have ſucceeded; of which Mr Fleming's foretelling, by the help of Scripture-prophecy, the preciſe time of the fall of the French monarchy, near a century before it happened, is a wonderful inſtance.*

2dly, Could we from the propheſies aſcertain the time of Antichriſt's fall, or ſhew clearly when this or any of the other great events that are the ſubject of prophecy is to happen, it would tend very much to the conviction of infidels, as it would ſtrengthen the evidence ariſing from the accompliſhment of Scripture-prophecy, and prevent an objection commonly made by theſe people, when you attempt to convince them, by ſhewing them how the event correſponds with the prediction: Why was not this done before,

* The reader will find ſeveral other inſtances of this, if he will take the trouble to conſult the following authors: Biſhop Newton, Vol. II. page 229. of the ninth edition. Kett on the propheſies, Vol. II. ſecond edition, pages 56, 57.

before, if ſuch an event, or the time when it was to happen, be foretold in Scripture? Why was it not known till after it happened? To this it may be anſwered, That moſt of the events contained in the propheſies were known before they happened, and alſo that we of the preſent age know moſt of the events contained in thoſe which remain to be fulfilled, the only thing hard to be underſtood is what relates to the circumſtances, the time, when, and the means and inſtruments by which the predicted events are to be brought about, and yet theſe have alſo ſometimes been diſcovered by learned men, as may be ſeen in the authors and places above mentioned; and if we could alſo ſhew from the propheſies the time when the fall of Antichriſt, or any of the other great events foretold in Scripture, is to happen, it would no doubt very much ſtrengthen the evidence of Scripture-propheey.

The time of Antichriſt's riſe is marked or pointed out by ſeveral cotemporary events, and as we may learn from hiſtory when theſe events happened, one would think it ſhould be eaſy to determine the time of his riſe: but here is the difficulty, events ſimilar to thoſe mentioned in the propheſies as cotemporary with the riſe of Antichriſt, have happened oftener than once, or the prophetic deſcription of the events by which the riſe of the Beaſt is marked, is often conceived in ſuch terms, that it will apply to two or more different events, and it is not eaſy to determine which of theſe we are to conſider as cotemporary with his riſe, or as deſigned to mark the time thereof. The only way to do this is, I imagine, to conſider which of theſe events coincides or agrees with the

the other events that are mentioned in Scripture as cotemporary with the riſe of the Beaſt, for that only can be his true aera, in which all the events by which the time of his riſe is marked in Scripture, meet or happen; for example, the healing of the Beaſt's deadly wound is commonly thought by commentators to be one of thoſe events by which the aera of the Beaſt is marked in Scripture; for immediately after mentioning this, the ſacred writer adds, "And "all the world wondered after the Beaſt," Rev. xiii. iii. Now, there are at leaſt two different events to which this prophecy is applicable, or that may be conſidered as a healing of the Beaſt's deadly wound; the firſt was Juſtinian's conqueſt of Italy, A. D. 552. by which the imperial name and power was reſtored, after it had ceaſed for about 70 or 80 years; the other was A. D. 800, when Charlemagne was proclaimed Emperor of the Romans; the prophecy applies almoſt equally well to both events, the queſtion then is, to which of them does it refer? Biſhop Newton thinks to the laſt. But does the time of this event agree with that of the other events mentioned in Scripture as cotemporary with the riſe of the Beaſt? by no means; for one of theſe is the riſe of ten new kingdoms within the territories of the Roman empire: Rev. xvii. 12. "The ten horns which thou "ſaweſt, are ten kings, which have received no king-"dom as yet, but receive power as kings one hour;" that is, as Biſhop Newton explains it, at the ſame time with the Beaſt. But the ten kingdoms were all riſen near 200 years before the erection of the weſtern empire by Charlemagne. The firſt of theſe periods, therefore,

fore, viz. the year 552, ſeems moſt likely to be the æra of the Beaſt.

Another of the marks by which the time of Antichriſt's riſe is pointed out to us in Scripture, is, that immediately, or a little before it, ſome great obſtacle that hindered it ſhould be taken out of the way, according to that of 2d Theſſ. ii. chap. 5, 6, 7. where, ſpeaking of the Man of Sin, he ſays, "Remember "ye not, that when I was yet with you, I told you "theſe things? And now ye know what withhold-"eth, that he might be revealed in his time. Only "he who now letteth, will let, until he be taken out "of the way." From the Apoſtle's manner of expreſſing himſelf, and from the tradition of the church concerning the meaning of this paſſage, it would ſeem, that that which hindered the appearance of the Man of Sin, was the Roman empire, or the imperial power in Italy. Beſides, it is a matter of fact that the power of the Roman Emperors, while they governed Italy, was the chief thing that checked the ambition and hindered the riſe of the Pope. But here, as in the former inſtances, there are two different events to which this prophecy is applicable; the firſt was, when the Heruli conquered Italy, and put an end to the weſtern empire, A. D. 476.; the other was when the Lombard's conquered Ravenna, and ſo extinguiſhed the power of the Greek Emperors in Italy, A. D. 752.; for there were two race of Emperors called Roman, viz. the eaſtern or Greek Emperors, as they are commonly called, who reſided at Conſtantinople, and the weſtern, whoſe reſidence was at Rome. Both of theſe governed Italy in their turn, and both were

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in ſome meaſure a check to the Roman Pontiff. The queſtion then is, To which of the two events does the prophecy refer, the extinction of the weſtern empire by the Heruli, or that of the Greek Emperor's power in Italy by the Lombards? Probably it refers to both, but chiefly to the firſt; for the weſtern Emperors, by reſiding at Rome, were a greater check upon the Popes than the eaſtern Emperors, who lived at a diſtance, and governed Italy by a deputy; beſides, the eaſtern Emperors were many of them great friends to the Pope, and by their exceſſive kindneſs helped to raiſe him.

The prophecy therefore applies much better to the deſtruction of the weſtern empire by the Heruli, than to the conqueſt of the exarchate by the Lombards. But what puts it out of all doubt that it refers chiefly, if not ſolely, to the firſt of theſe events, is, that the time of this event coincides exactly with that of the riſe of the ten kings, which the other does not. The ſame may be ſaid of that prophecy, chap. xvii. 10. concerning the ſeventh head, or the other, which in the Apoſtle's time was not yet come, and was to continue a little ſpace, and to precede the riſe of the Pope. There are alſo two things to which it applies. Mr Fleming and ſome others underſtand it of the Goths, who reigned in Italy for ſome time. Biſhop Newton underſtands it of the dukes of Rome. If it means the Goths, then the riſe of the Pope ſhould be about the year 537, when the Goths loſt Rome, or the year 552, when they were totally ſubdued. If it means the dukes of Rome, then his riſe ſhould be about the year 727, when the government of the dukes was aboliſhed;

bolished; but this laſt event does not agree, in reſpect of time, with another of the events mentioned in Scripture as cotemporary with the riſe of the Pope, namely, that of the ten kings; but the other event, the fall of the Goths does. And as it is plainly intimated that the fall of the ſeventh head was to precede or make way for the riſe of the Beaſt, ſo the fall of the Goths was followed by a remarkable ſtep in the Pope's riſe, for the empire of the Goths may be conſidered as having fallen with Theodoric, who died in the year 527; and ſeven years after that, that is, in the year 534, Juſtinian paſſed that famous edict, ſo often quoted by writers on this ſubject, wherein the Pope was declared head of the church, and that all were to be ſubject to his judgment, but he himſelf to be judged by none. For theſe reaſons, and for others formerly mentioned, I am decidedly of opinion, that this prophecy is chiefly to be underſtood of the Goths, or that they are the ſeventh head, which was to continue a ſhort ſpace, and to make way for the Beaſt, who was to be the eight, though I doubt not but it has a reference to the exarchate alſo, for the conqueſt of this contributed to the riſe of the Pope's power, as well as the fall of the Goths. The one preceded and gave birth to his ſupremacy or ſpiritual dominion, the other to his temporal; the one made him the head of the church, that is, the ſpiritual head of the Roman empire or of the Beaſt; the other made him the ſovereign or temporal head of Rome, and the territories belonging to it. But his ſpiritual dominion or ſupremacy, as we have formerly ſhewn, is the chief thing that which, properly ſpeaking, conſti-

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tutes him Pope, and in reſpect of which he is both the head and image of the Beaſt; and therefore his obtaining this, or the eſtabliſhment of his eccleſiaſtical authority, muſt be the principal ſtep in his riſe; and this certainly was eſtabliſhed long before he obtained the ſovereignty of Rome, and the government of the dukes was aboliſhed, though I confeſs there is ſome ground to doubt whether his eccleſiaſtical authority was fully eſtabliſhed ſo early as the year 534.

Firſt, Becauſe the Goths, who, as we have already ſhewn, were the ſeventh head, whoſe fall was to make way for the riſe of the Pope, continued to poſſeſs Rome till the year 537, when it was taken by Beliſarius the Greek general, that is, three years after Juſtinian's edict; but it was not till they loſt Rome that they ceaſed to be the head thereof, or that the ſeventh head was cut off, if it was indeed cut off then; for the Goths after that took the city ſeveral times, and ſadly waſted it, yet as they never kept it for any length of time, and it was from that day forward, viz. the year 537, when Beliſarus took it, for the moſt part in the hands of the Greeks, they, and not the Goths are thenceforth to be conſidered as the heads of Rome. This event, therefore, the taking of Rome from the Goths, looks very like the fall of the ſeventh head, it certainly was ſo in part. It was moreover an event, that favoured the ambitious views of the Pope, for after that the city, which was the place of his reſidence, being for the moſt part in the hands of his friends, and thoſe whom he had obliged, or rather who had raiſed him; he was more at liberty to uſurp and domineer in the church than before, had

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it more in his power to make good the new title, which Juſtinian had a little before conferred on him. This event, therefore, may juſtly be conſidered as one of the remarkable ſteps of the Pope's riſe; accordingly, when the years of Antichriſt's reign are added to the year 537 when it happened, they terminate exactly in the time of the late revolution in Rome. But whether this period 537, when the Goths loſt Rome, or the year 552, when they were totally ſubdued, is to be accounted the time of their fall, and of the ſeventh head, and which of the two periods coincides with the æra of the Beaſt, or the principal ſtep of his riſe, or whether this be not at a period ſomewhat later than either of them, I have not yet been able with certainty to diſcover, nor can it, I imagine, be clearly aſcertained from any of the paſſages that have yet been examined; only, from what has been ſaid, we think it almoſt certain, that the æra of the Beaſt, that is, the principal ſtep of his riſe, could not be prior to the year 537, nor much later than the year 552.

Firſt, It could not be prior to the year 537, becauſe the riſe of the Beaſt is placed by the ſacred writer himſelf after the fall of the ſeventh head; and though Biſhop Newton, and ſome few more, have been of opinion, that the dukes of Rome, or the exarchs of Ravenna, were the ſeventh head, yet no judicious writer that I have ſeen, ever thought that the time of the ſeventh head was prior to that of the Goths, except Mr Taylor of Larbert, and the event has clearly proved that he was miſtaken. But the year 537, when they loſt Rome, is certainly the earlieſt

period that can, with any appearance of reaſon, be conſidered as that of their fall, conſequently the riſe of the Beaſt could not be prior to that period.

2dly, Neither could it be much latter than the year 552, otherwiſe it would not coincide with the riſe of the ten kingdoms, as it ought to do, Rev xvii. 12. The two laſt of them, as we have already ſhewn, were the kingdom of the Lombards, and the exarchate of Ravenna, and both theſe roſe at the ſame time, viz. in the year 568, I mean the exarchate, properly ſo called, and the kingdom of the Lombards in Italy; though it may with a good deal of reaſon be affirmed, that the riſe of theſe two kingdoms was at an earlier period; for Narſes, who conquered the Goths, was properly ſpeaking the firſt exarch, and is ſo called by the hiſtorian Gibbon. He ruled Italy twelve or fourteen years, and began his government in the year 552, and the Lombards were at that time in Pannonia, ſo that both theſe kingdoms were then in being. But theſe two are generally, and with good reaſon, thought to be two of the three kingdoms which the little horn plucked up by the root; and as it was not the kingdom of the Lombards in Pannonia but in Italy, nor the exarchate of Narſes, who governed all Italy, but of Ravenna that was ſubdued by the Pope, and theſe two did not exiſt till the year 568; it may be doubted whether the number of the ten kingdoms was complete till then, and conſequently whether the riſe of the Beaſt can be dated from an earlier period; but admitting that the riſe of the Beaſt was not till the year 568, this, as we ſaid, is not much later than the year 552, *q. e. d.* Beſides, we have already

already ſhewn, that the prophecy concerning the ſeventh head, or the other, which in the Apoſtle's time was not yet come, is chiefly to be underſtood of the Goths: the Beaſt is expreſsly ſaid to be the eighth; therefore, one would think, that his riſe could not be much later than their fall. It is true, it is not ſaid that the one ſhould immediately ſucceed to the other, but neither is it ſaid, that there was to be any interval betwixt them, much leſs ſuch a long interval as there muſt be, if the riſe of the Pope is not to be counted till he obtained the principality of Rome. Beſides, it ſeems plainly from the Apoſtle's manner, to be the intention of the prophecy, to point out the time of the Beaſt's riſe, namely, by this mark, that it ſhould be ſoon after the fall of the ſeventh head, or that he ſhould be the next in ſucceſſion; and, if ſo, then the riſe of the Pope could not be long after the fall of that head, otherwiſe the end of the prophecy could not be anſwered; for how could it ſerve to point out the time of his riſe, if there was to be a long and uncertain interval betwixt it and the fall of the ſeventh head. Biſhop Newton ſeems to have been ſenſible of the force of this argument; for as he ſuppoſes that the dukes of Rome were the ſeventh head, whoſe government ceaſed in the year 727, ſo he makes the riſe of the Beaſt to be the ſame year. The ſame may be ſaid of moſt writers, for they all place the riſe of the Beaſt either after the fall of the Goths, or whatever elſe they take to be the ſeventh head; however, I do not look upon this argument as quite concluſive, though there is ſomething in it.

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Firſt, Becauſe this prophecy may be intended not to point out the time of the Beaſt's riſe, but to point out the Beaſt himſelf, or as a mark to let poſterity know who he is, namely, that he ſhould be the eighth head, or the eighth kind of ruler that ſhould govern the Roman empire; at leaſt there is nothing in the words from which we can clearly infer, that this is not the only intent of the prophecy.

2dly, Becauſe it is not ſaid that the Beaſt ſhould make his appearance immediately after the fall of the ſeventh head, but only that he was to be the eighth in ſucceſſion; therefore I do not conſider the laſt of the foregoing arguments as having much weight in it: there is much more in this, that the fall of the Goths coincides with the riſe of the Pope's ſupremacy; for Juſtinian's edict, whereby this was eſtabliſhed, was paſſed in the year 534, which was juſt ſeven years after Theodoric died, whoſe death may be conſidered as the firſt ſtep in the fall of the Goths, and four years before they loſt Rome, which was the ſecond. By this edict, and by the Franks acknowledging the Pope's authority, which they did in the end of the preceding century, the Pope became the ſpiritual head, not only of Rome, but of the Roman empire, that is, of the Beaſt, or he became the chief eccleſiaſtical ruler therein: thus his ſupremacy was eſtabliſhed, and his ſupremacy, as we ſhewed before, is the chief thing.

Another proof that the æra of the Beaſt, or the principal ſtep of his riſe, was about the middle of the ſixth century, or the time of the fall of the Goths is this: We ſhewed formerly that the Pope is the head

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of the Beaſt, but it is only in reſpect of his eccleſiaſtical authority or his ſpiritual dominion that he is ſo; becauſe, properly ſpeaking, he never was the temporal head of the empire, but only of Rome, and the eccleſiaſtical ſtates as they are called; for though he often meddled with affairs of ſtate, and took upon him to diſpoſe of kingdoms, yet the right by which he pretended to do ſo, was wholly founded on his ſpiritual authority, as the vicar of Chriſt, and ſucceſſor of St Peter. It is in reſpect of his ſpiritual dominion, therefore, that he is the head of the Beaſt; and this, we have juſt now ſhewn, was eſtabliſhed about the middle of the ſixth century; conſequently, the aera of the Beaſt, one would think, ſhould alſo be about that time, which is either in the year 537, when the Goths loſt Rome, or 552, when they were totally ſubdued; for theſe were the two principal ſteps in their fall; and the Goths, as we have ſhewn, were the ſeventh head, whoſe fall was to make way for the riſe of the Pope. And what confirms this, is theſe two periods, when the years of Antichriſt's reign are added to them, terminate exactly in the preſent times, which have all the appearance of being the time of God's vengence on Bablyon for the controverſy of Zion. The laſt of theſe periods, viz. the year 552, coincides alſo with all the events by which the riſe of the Beaſt is marked in Scripture: it coincides, as we have juſt now ſeen, with the fall of the ſeventh head: it coincides with the healing of the Beaſt's deadly wound; for upon Juſtinian's conqueſt of Italy, the imperial name and power was reſtored there: and it coincides with the riſe of the ten kingdoms; for the exarchate, which

which was the laſt of them, roſe at the ſame time with the fall of the Goths; Narſes, who conquered them, being made the firſt exarch. This, therefore, is a notable period, and ſeems moſt likely to be the æra of the Beaſt, or the principal ſtep in his riſe; although the year 537 was alſo a remarkable ſtep in his riſe, and correſponds with as remarkable a ſtep in his fall, viz. the late conqueſt of the Pope's dominions by the French; yet as the ten kingdoms were not then all riſen, nor the Goths, the ſeventh head, totally fallen, I do not think it ſo notable a period as the other. To which we may add, that if the year 537 were the principal ſtep of the Beaſt's riſe, then the year 1797 ſhould have been the principal ſtep of his fall. But from what has lately happened in France and Italy, there is reaſon to believe that this is ſtill future; for theſe reaſons, I look upon the year 552 as the principal of the two periods, and what is moſt likely to prove the æra of the Beaſt. The years of Antichriſt's reign, when added to this period, terminate in the year 1812; and when we conſider the ſigns of the times, the many ſtrange revolutions that have lately happened in the world, and which ſeem to portend the approach of ſome great event, ſuch as that of which we treat the dreadful calamities that have already fallen on many of the worſhippers of the Beaſt, and other arguments which the reader will find in different parts of this diſcourſe, it is by no means improbable, that the principal ſtep of his fall may be at that time. But as it is not ſaid that the Beaſt or eighth head was immediately to ſucceed the ſeventh, and as the two laſt of the ten kingdoms, viz. that

that of the Lombards and the exarchate, have commonly been thought not to commence till about the year 568, which is only fifteen years later than the former period, perhaps the event may ſhew, that this was the true aera of the Beaſt. If this be indeed his aera, then his greateſt fall will be A. D. 1828.

Another reaſon for fixing the aera of the Beaſt at the year 552, is that the overthrow of the Goths was in all probability owing to the Pope; and, if ſo, the kingdom of the Goths muſt be the firſt of the three that were plucked up by him. Some judicious writers have been of this opinion, and there are ſeveral good reaſons for it.

Firſt, That the Pope had a hand in the overthrow of that people, is clear from the hiſtory of thoſe times; for in the year 537, upon Belſarius's coming with an army to beſiege Rome, the Romans opened their gates and received him joyfully; and Evagrius poſitively affirms, that this was brought to paſs through the perſuaſion of Pope Silverius. The garriſon left by Vitiges, king of the Goths, finding that they could not make head at the ſame time againſt the Emperor's army and the citizens, retired by the Flaminian gate, while Beliſarius entered by the Aſinarian. Thus, through the treachery of Pope Silverius, the city of Rome was delivered up to the imperial general, and this paved his way to the conqueſt of the Goths. Thus the Pope, though he had done no more, might be ſaid to have plucked up the kingdom of the Goths, as a man may be ſaid to do a thing when he helps another to do it, though he himſelf be not the principal. But in this caſe there is reaſon to think, that he was

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the prime mover and cauſe of the war, and that it was he that adviſed and inſtigated the Greek Emperor to it; for the Greek Emperors were at that time zealous Catholics. On the contrary, the kings of the Goths were Arians and enemies to Popery; they were beſides a check upon the Popes, as we obſerved formerly; it was natural therefore, for the Pope to wiſh their overthrow, to chooſe the protection of a Catholic rather than of an Arian prince, and to have one at the diſtance of Conſtantinople rather than at Ravenna. And when we conſider what lawleſs and unprincipled creatures the Popes have always been, how little ſcrupulous about the means they uſe for the accompliſhment of their ends, there is ground to ſuſpect that Pope John, when he was at Conſtantinople, being ſent by Theodoric to ſtop the perſecution that was going on againſt the Arians, betrayed his truſt, and in concert with the Emperor and his nephew Juſtinian, projected the overthrow of the Goths. What confirms this ſuſpicion is, that though the Pope, by his influence and authority, procured a revocation of the edict againſt the Arians, and that they ſhould be reſtored to their former privileges; yet upon his return, he and his attendant, by the king's orders, were caſt into priſon, where ſoon after he died. To which we may add, that the chief men in Rome, as hiſtorians tell us, were at this very time ſuſpected of carrying on a treaſonable correſpondence with the court at Conſtantinople. There is, therefore, good reaſons for aſcribing the deſtruction of the Gothic kingdom in Italy to the Papal power; and, if ſo, then this kingdom muſt be one of the three that it pluck-

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ed up by the roots. If any ſhall object, that it was not the Pope, properly ſpeaking, but Juſtinian that conquered the Goths, I anſwer, neither did the Pope by himſelf conquer the Lombards, but only ſtirred up the king of the Francs to do it; and yet moſt writers think, that their kingdom was one of the three that the Pope plucked up. But it may be further objected, that the Pope did not get the kingdom of the Goths to himſelf. When Charles conquered the Lombards, he gave a great part of their kingdom to the Pope, but ſo did not Juſtinian. Anſwer, His plucking up theſe kingdoms by the roots, does not imply that he was to get them all to himſelf; it means only, that he was to be the cauſe of their overthrow, and yet the Pope gained conſiderably by the deſtruction of the Goths; he got rid of a troubleſome neighbour that was a check upon him; he got an acceſſion of power and influence, and in proceſs of time he got a great part of the kingdom of the Goths. He firſt got the duchy of Rome, after that the exarchate, and then a great part of the kingdom of the Lombards, all which had formerly belonged to the Goths. But to this it may be objected, that the little horn is ſaid not only to pluck up three of the firſt horns, but alſo to ſubdue three kingdoms, which ſeems to imply, that he was to get poſſeſſion of them; and as Biſhop Newton obſerves, the Pope hath in a manner pointed himſelf out for the perſon, by wearing the triple crown. But unleſs we ſuppoſe that the duchy of Rome, the exarchate of Ravenna, and the kingdom of the Lombards, are theſe three kingdoms, where, and which are they? The three coun-

tries juſt now mentioned, are at preſent ſubject to the Pope, and are well enough known to the learned. But we cannot ſay ſo of the kingdom of the Goths; for all Italy belonged to them, and there is no part of it that can be called their kingdom more than another: Beſides, the three kingdoms which the little horn got muſt be diſtinct, elſe how ſhall it be known that the prophecy has been fulfilled; but if we ſuppoſe that the kingdom of the Goths was one of them, we confound this one with the other two. For theſe reaſons, I incline rather to the opinion of Sir Iſaac, that the three kingdoms which were ſubdued by the little horn, were the duchy of Rome, the exarchate of Ravenna, and the kingdom of the Lombards. But to Sir Iſaac's plan Biſhop Newton objects, Vol. I. page 267, that only two of the three are mentioned in his catalogue of the ten kingdoms, the ſenate and dukedom of Rome not being included in the number. But there were not only three horns to be plucked up before the little horn, but three of the firſt horns; therefore none ſhould be reckoned as one of three, but what was among the ten. But this objection is eaſily anſwered; for he might have taken the dukedom of Rome into his catalogue of the ten kings, and left out another for it; and this is what he ought to have done, if he believed that the ſaid dukedom was one of the three horns. But the reaſon, I ſuppoſe, why he did not, is becauſe he makes the riſe of the Beaſt to be in the latter half of the eighth century, and at that time the government of Rome by dukes was gone, having been ſupplanted by the Pope as ſome think, and by the ſenate according to others; but

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this is no reaſon why thoſe who fix the riſe of the Beaſt at an earlier period may not take the dukedom into their catalogue. Biſhop Newton, who alſo places the riſe of the Beaſt in the eighth century, to remedy this defect of Sir Iſaac's, gives us a catalogue of the ten kingdoms, as they ſtood in the eighth century, ſomewhat different from his; and inſtead of the dukedom he takes the ſenate of Rome into it, for which he gives this reaſon: The people of Rome revolted from the Emperor in the year 727, after which, though in things ſpiritual they were ſubject to the Popes, yet in things temporal they were governed by the ſenate. But this opinion is liable to great objections.

Firſt, It is contrary to the teſtimony of the hiſtorians of that time, particularly of Sigonius; for, ſpeaking of the revolt of the Romans from the Greek Emperor, he ſays, Thus Rome, and the Roman dukedom came from the Greeks to the Roman Pontiff; from which it is evident, that he took the Pope, and not the ſenate of Rome, to be the chief ruler in that city after the revolt thereof.

2dly, It is contrary to the opinion of the Biſhop himſelf in another place; for in Vol. II. of the ninth edition, page 375, he ſays, What appears to be moſt probable, is, that the beginning of the reign of Antichriſt is to be dated from the year 727, and then quotes the words of Sigonius cited above, and immediately after he adds, Hereby he, viz. the Pope, became in ſome meaſure a temporal prince.

3dly, If after the revolt of the Romans, the ſenate and not the Pope had the chief power in their hands, then

then they were the head of the city; and as this was a form of government different from any of the former, and alſo from that which ſucceeded, then Rome muſt have had nine heads, and not eight only, contrary to the words of the angel, chap. 17.

As a farther proof of his opinion, the Biſhop tells us, that the ſenate had the power of electing the weſtern emperor; but this is contradicted by all the hiſtorians I have ſeen, who expreſsly affirm, that Charles was elected by the Pope. As to the ſtruggle betwixt the ſenate and the Pope which he mentions, it does not prove that the ſenate had the chief power in their hands, but only that they wiſhed to have it.

From what has been ſaid, therefore, it is evident, that it is not the ſenate, but the dukedom of Rome, that ought to be reckoned either among the ten kingdoms, or the three that were plucked up before the little horn. To this it may be objected, that the dukedom of Rome was not a kingdom, or a diſtinct independent government, but a part of the exarchate; theſe two therefore are, properly ſpeaking, but one power or government. But to this it may be anſwered, neither was the exarchate an independent government, and yet it is commonly reckoned one of the three kingdoms. The duchy of Rome was a country of conſiderable extent, containing, beſides the city itſelf, which was then one of the largeſt in the world, part of Tuſcany, and Campania. Though dependent on the exarchate, it was ſomething diſtinct from it. Accordingly when it revolted from the Greeks, no other part of the exarchate joined with it. It would appear alſo, that it was not juſt reduced to a level with the

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other dukedoms into which Italy was divided, but enjoyed ſomething more of liberty and power. Its ſenate, ſays Biſhop Newton, ſtill retained many of its old privileges, Vol. II. page 268. The dukedom might therefore be called a kingdom, as well as ſome other ſtates and countries that have been ſo called, at leaſt as well as the exarchate.

What has made me dwell the longer upon this is, that the government of the ſenate, if ever there was ſuch a thing, did not begin till the year 727; and therefore, if we admit that it was one of the horns, we muſt alſo admit that their number was not complete till then, and conſequently that the riſe of the Pope could not be at an earlier period.

Mr Bicheno is of opinion, that the ſecond woe, or ſixth trumpet, terminated in the year 1697, when prince Eugene overthrew the Turks at Zenta: See Bicheno, page 86.—90, 92. that France was the ſtreet of the great city, where the witneſſes lay dead three lunar days and a half, or 105 years, viz. from A. D. 1685, when the edict of Nantz was revoked, till A. D. 1789, when the French revolution began; that this was the reſurrection of the witneſſes, the commotions which followed, the prophetic earthquake, and that the fall of the tenth part of the city was accompliſhed in the overthrow of the monarchy or tyranny in France. This interpretation is very plauſible, and perhaps is true in the main. In one thing, however, I apprehend Mr Bicheno is miſtaken, namely, in making the ſecond woe terminate in the year 1697; for it is evident from the prophecy itſelf, that the reſurrection of the witneſſes, the fall of the tenth part of the

the city, and the paſſing of the ſecond woe, are all cotemporary, or happen within a few years of one another; whereas, by placing the end of the ſecond woe in the year 1697, he makes it to happen near 100 years before the reſurrection of the witneſſes. If the French revolution be indeed the thing ſignified by the reſurrection of the witneſſes, I ſhould rather think, that the paſſing of the ſecond woe was at the concluſion of the laſt war which the Empreſs of Ruſſia had with the Turks; wherein, after giving them many defeats, killing ſome hundred thouſands of them, and taking a conſiderable part of their territory from them, ſhe at laſt forced them to conclude a peace very much to their diſadvantage; at the ſame time, a law was paſſed by the Grand Signior, that no Mahometan ſhould henceforth inſult a Chriſtian, as they had heretofore been in uſe to do. This peace, which was concluded in the year 1791, and coincides exactly with the French revolution, looks more like the paſſing of the ſecond woe, than any of the events or times above mentioned. If this was indeed the paſſing of the ſecond woe, then the revolution in France muſt be the reſurrection of the witneſſes, and the overthrow of the monarchy, or rather of Popery in that country, will be the fall of the tenth part of the city, and the wars that have ſince that time ravaged Europe, particularly Italy, will be the beginning of the ſeventh trumpet or third woe. Several things concur to render this probable:

Firſt, The third woe comes quickly after the ſecond, and the late war occaſioned by the French revolution,

revolution, ſucceeded quickly to the war between the Ruſſians and Turks.

2dly, The late war has been carried on with ſuch fierceneſs and ſpirit, productive of ſo much bloodſhed and ſlaughter ſo general, and accompanied with ſuch awful judgments of a different kind, viz. famine and peſtilence, that it has all the appearance of being the third woe.

3dly, As the ſecond woe, i. e. the devaſtations and bloodſhed cauſed by the Turks, was worſe than that cauſed by the Saracens or firſt woe, ſo it is natural to think that the third woe would be worſe than either. This character alſo agrees perfectly to the preſent time. For I believe moſt people will agree with me, that there has not been as much bloodſhed, and as many miſeries of every kind occaſioned by any war that has been in Europe for upwards of 1000 years, at leaſt not ſince the days of Mahomet II. who overturned the Greek empire, and was the principal inſtrument in executing the judgments ſignified by the ſecond woe.

4thly, The French in their character very much reſemble the other two woes, viz. the Saracens and Turks, being all three alike infidels and enemies to Chriſt. They reſemble them likewiſe in their ambitious, reſtleſs, and warlike diſpoſition. Notwithſtanding this argument, however, I doubt much if the ſecond be yet paſt.

Firſt, Becauſe, from the order of the events in the xith of Revelation, the paſſing of the ſecond woe ſeems rather to come after the reſurrection of the witneſſes than to go before it; but if we ſuppoſe the

French

French revolution to be the reſurrection of the witneſſes, and the paſſing of the ſecond woe to be in the year 1791, we make the paſſing of the ſecond woe to go before the reſurrection of the witneſſes.

2dly, Becauſe, as we obſerved before, the words of St John, Rev. xi. 14. "the ſecond woe is paſt," ſeem to imply a total ceſſation of that plague, or a complete deliverance from it. But the Turkiſh empire is ſtill ſtanding, and ſtill continues to oppreſs the eaſtern churches, though not to that degree that it once did.

3dly, As the third woe is ſaid to come quickly after the ſecond, if we ſuppoſe the paſſing of the ſecond woe to have been in the year 1791, then the late war with the French, which began ſoon after that period, muſt be the third woe, at leaſt one would think ſo; but if the late war was the third woe, what events ſhall we ſuppoſe to be the great earthquake, and the falling of the tenth part of the city? for both theſe precede the third woe.

4thly, The late troubles could not be the third woe, becauſe this comes after the ſecond; and the end of the ſecond, as we have already ſeen, either coincides with the reſurrection and aſcenſion of the witneſſes, or follows hard after theſe events. But though the French revolution was probably the reſurrection of the witneſſes, yet their aſcenſion ſeems to be ſtill future; for it is natural to think that this will be a joyful event and productive of good to the church; but the French revolution has not been productive of any great good to the church as yet, although, I believe, it has paved the way for good to it.

5thly,

5thly, It is ſaid, that when the tenth part of the city fell, and ſo many thouſands were ſlain in the earthquake, the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven; that is, as I conceive, renounced the idols of the church of Rome, and turned to the true God; but I do not ſee how this has been fulfilled: neither have the remnant of the Papiſts, that is, the other Popiſh powers, as Auſtria, Spain, and Portugal, repented of their idols; nor yet the remnant of the French themſelves, that is, thoſe who have ſurvived the deſolations of the late war: neither, I ſay, have they repented, but are either turning deiſts, or ſliding back into Popery; however, their repentance may come about in time. They have hitherto been ſo buſied with the operations of war, and their minds ſo occupied with the revolutions thereof, that they have not had time to think ſeriouſly of religion, or to examine the evidences thereof. Their paſſions have not yet had time to ſubſide, or their prejudices to wear off; and therefore it is poſſible, that they may yet ſee their error, and inſtead of caſting off all religion, or returning to the ſuperſtitions of Popery, turn to the true God, by acknowledging the truth of his word, and embracing the pure and uncorrupted doctrines thereof. Perhaps they are not yet ſufficiently humbled, and may yet meet with afflictions that will force them to this, or perhaps ſome great event or revolution, ſuch as the converſion of the Jews, may be the means of opening their eyes, and leading them to an acknowledgement of the truth. But whatever ſhall be the means of their converſion, I truſt it will come about ere long,

and if it does, it will, in my opinion, be the aſcenſion of the witneſſes; for the beginning of the French revolution, I ſuppoſe, was their reſurrection: the late war was the great earthquake, and the converſion of the French, or their becoming Proteſtant, ſhould it happen, would be the aſcenſion of the witneſſes; or we may ſuppoſe the beginning of the French revolution was the reſurrection of the witneſſes; the year 94 or 95, when the republican form of government was fully eſtabliſhed in that country was their aſcenſion, and their converſion to the Proteſtant religion will be the fall of the tenth part of the city, or the remnant's giving glory to God. Mr Mede, I acknowledge, gives a different turn to theſe words. He thinks, that the remnant's giving glory to God, means no more but their acknowledging unwillingly his hand and power by their aſtoniſhment or ſurpriſe; for, ſays he, to acknowledge the wiſdom, power, and goodneſs of God, by what token ſoever, is to give glory to him. In this I apprehend he is miſtaken, mere aſtoniſhment at any of the diſpenſations of Providence, unleſs it be expreſſed by word or deed, is not giving glory to God, is not acknowledging either his goodneſs or his power. He inſtances in the caſe of Achan, but this I imagine is againſt him, for Achan acknowledged God by an open confeſſion. Biſhop Newton's gloſs on the words, though not very explicit, is rather better than Mede's, and the remainder in their fright and fear ſhall acknowledge the great power of God. But by what deed or token have either the French, or any of the neighbouring powers, acknowledged the power of God or his Providence in the late events

that

that have taken place on the continent. None that I know of; ſure I am they have not yet repented of their idolatry in worſhipping the creature, nor acknowledged the true God as the only object of religious worſhip, which I take to be the true ſenſe of the phraſe, giving glory to God in this place. This part of the prophecy, therefore, ſeems not to be fulfilled as yet, neither this concerning the remnant's giving glory to God, nor that concerning the paſſing of the ſecond woe, which, as I obſerved formerly, ſeems to coincide with it. It is probable, however, that both will be fulfilled ere long.

The late revolution in France looks ſo like the falling of the tenth part of the city, and the troubles that followed it ſo like the great earthquake, in which 7000 names of men were ſlain; the revolution which happened in Rome in the year 1797, and the calamities which at that time befel the Pope, are ſo like what is ſaid of the fifth vial, that I cannot help thinking, that the events which have lately taken place in France and Italy, were a fulfilling of theſe propheſies; and conſequently that the fall both of the Pope and Turk is near. This, I ſay, is my opinion, although, for reaſons which ſhall be given immediately, I am not without fear that the death and reſurrection of the witneſſes is ſtill to come.

Firſt, Becauſe, though this prophecy applies ſurpriſingly well to the above events, I mean to the French revolution, and the events that have hitherto accompanied it, yet, as Biſhop Newton has ſhewn, Vol. III. page 87, it is applicable to different times and events, and had been ſeveral times fulfilled before that in which

which he wrote; and therefore it is uncertain whether there be not ſome period or revolution ſtill future, to which it will apply as well or better than to any that are paſt.

2dly, Both Mr Mede and Biſhop Newton are of opinion, that the death of the witneſſes, whatever it means, whether a perſecution againſt the Proteſtants in general, or a ſilencing of the miniſtry, and not permitting them to exerciſe their prophetic office, or to teſtify againſt the errors of Popery, or whatever elſe it may be, that it will be univerſal or general through Chriſtendom; for which Biſhop Newton aſſigns this reaſon, Vol. III. page 88, that as the witneſſes are deſigned to be the repreſentatives of the Proteſtants in general, ſo the perſecution ſignified by their death muſt be general too, and not confined to this or that particular church or nation. In anſwer to this it may be ſaid, that the Apoſtle's uſing the word ſtreet in the ſinglar number, looks as if the death of the witneſſes was not to be general, but confined to ſome one of the kingdoms belonging to the great city.

3dly, It may be objected to the above application of the prophecy, that it ſuppoſes the French to be the witneſſes, a ſuppoſition that ſeems ill to agree with their preſent character. There are, however, many good people, and not a few Proteſtants in France, and their having now obtained a free toleration, after having been ſo long perſecuted, is perhaps the thing meant by the reſurrection of the witneſſes.

Another thing that makes me apprehenſive, that the death of the witneſſes, or the three days and a half

half are ſtill to come, is, that according to the beſt information that I am able to procure, Popery both here and in England is at preſent rather upon the increaſe. But what moſt of all excites my fears, is the general decay of true piety, and the prevalence of vice and infidelity among all ranks, and in all countries in Europe; for, as we obſerved before, men often run from one extreme to another, and as Popery has led others to infidelity, ſo it is not impoſſible that our infidelity may lead us to Popery, not that I imagine it poſſible for any man, who has been properly educated in the principles of the Proteſtant faith, ever to become a Papiſt at bottom, or truly to believe the abſurdities of Popery; but when once men have loſt all ſenſe of religion, they will, when tempted to it, profeſs any thing; and therefore, ſhould it ever be our misfortune to be under a Popiſh government, or ſhould the Roman Catholics ever attempt, by the power of money, or any other means, to introduce their religion amongſt us, it is to be feared, conſidering the laxneſs of the preſent age, and the prevalence of infidelity amongſt us, that too many would yield to the temptation. Thus, as Popery made way for infidelity in one country, ſo it is poſſible, that vice and infidelity may open the door to Popery in another. However, I would fain hope that the death of the witneſſes is already paſt, although, for the reaſons juſt now mentioned, I am not without fear that it is ſtill to come; but if it is, it cannot be very diſtant. The late war was ſo general, bloody, and deſtructive, cauſed ſuch expence, miſery, and trouble to all parties, and fell with ſuch vengeance on the territories of the

Beaſt,

Beaſt, who is one of the principal ſubjects of Scripture-prophecy, that as it ſeems well to deſerve being taken notice of by the Holy Spirit, ſo I cannot help thinking it muſt have a place ſomewhere in the Revelation, which is one of the longeſt and fulleſt prophecies in Scripture, and, as moſt of our Divines think, contains all the great and important events that were deſtined to happen in the church, from the Apoſtles days to the end of the world. And if it is any where to be found in that book, it muſt be either in the xith, xivth, or xvith chapters, which are the only places where the different ſteps of Antichriſt's fall are treated of. In the xith chapter, I can find nothing that reſembles the late war, but the great earthquake, in which the tenth part of the city fell, or the third woe. In the xivth chapter, there are two periods of great war and bloodſhed, ſpoken of under the metaphors of the harveſt and vintage; perhaps the many cruel and murderous battles, that were lately fought in Germany and Italy, are the thing meant by the firſt of theſe metaphors, and what is meant by the ſecond is ſtill future. The xvith chapter treats of the vials or the ſeven laſt plagues, whereby the Beaſt or Papal power is gradually deſtroyed and brought to nothing; and as the late revolution in France was a heavy ſtroke on the Papacy, it is probably ſignified by ſome of them. The firſt three vials, according to Mede, Fleming, and ſeveral of the moſt approved writers, are long ſince paſt; the ſixth, as we have ſhewn above, is ſtill future; and therefore, if the French revolution be ſignified by any of the vials, it muſt be either the fourth or fifth: but conſidering

conſidering it is now 300 years nearly ſince the firſt of the vials, which was undoubtedly fulfilled in the reformation of religion by Luther began, conſidering alſo the many calamities that have fallen on the Papiſts ſince that time, it is more than probable that the fourth vial is paſt. For this, and for other reaſons mentioned above, I am fully of opinion that we are now under the fifth vial, and in this I agree with Dr Kett and Mr Fleming. The laſt of theſe writers thought that this vial would begin in the year 1794, and end in the year 1848. But though I agree with him in the main with reſpect to his explanation of the vials, yet I apprehend that the length of them, or the preciſe time when each of them begins and ends, is ſtill a matter of uncertainty; ſo that we may either add to or ſubtract from any of them, when this is neceſſary to make it agree with other propheſies where the ſame events ſeem to be pointed out. Now if the French revolution was indeed the reſurrection of the witneſſes, and the fall of the tenth part of the city, the end of the fifth vial muſt be nearer than Mr Fleming ſuppoſes; for we have already ſhewn, that the aſcenſion of the witneſſes, which cannot be long after their reſurrection, coincides with the paſſing of the ſecond woe, and this with the ſixth vial. But ſuppoſe the French revolution was not the reſurrection of the witneſſes, ſtill it may be, and very probably was the beginning of the fifth vial; and in that caſe, the death and reſurrection of the witneſſes, and conſequently the fall of Antichriſt, cannot be very diſtant; for the fifth vial comprehends the principal ſtep of Antichriſt's fall, and this undoubtedly is the reſurrection

reſurrection or aſcenſion of the witneſſes; at any rate, the French revolution has been a great means of weakening the power of Antichriſt, and humbled him more than any thing that has ever yet befallen him. Beſides the ſlaughter of many thouſands of his beſt friends, he has been ſtript of the greater part of the revenue which he formerly drew from France, which he can never recover without a new revolution; he cannot appoint a ſingle clergyman to any office in that country without the conſent of the chief conſul, who is now properly ſpeaking the head of the Gallican church: but the ſevereſt blow that the Pope's intereſt has got, is the free toleration that has lately been granted to the Proteſtants, both in France and the duke of Bavaria's dominions. This, unleſs ſome unforeſeen accident ſhould ſpring up to hinder it, muſt ſooner or latter bring on a reformation in theſe countries; for when men are at liberty to chuſe for themſelves in matters of religion, it is natural to think they will chooſe the beſt. Enlightened minds will certainly do ſo, and theſe will lead the reſt. It is true, their worldly intereſt may determine ſome to make a wrong choice, and wicked men in power may influence others; but in a land of light and liberty, ſuch as France, where the moſt perfect freedom of inquiry is allowed, at leaſt with reſpect to matters of religion, error cannot laſt long. Another effect of the French revolution, and a ſevere blow on the Papal authority, is the ſecularization at preſent going on of the Biſhopricks or eccleſiaſtical ſtates in Germany. Theſe eccleſiaſtical princes, notwithſtanding their temporal ſovereignty, have great dependance on the Popes; they

they are obliged to ſend immediately to Rome for a confirmation of their elections, and to omit it is a reaſon ſufficient for the Popes to ſet aſide their elections as defective. Beſides, their dependence on the Popes, their intereſts were ſo mutually linked together, they ſupported them as one common intereſt: See Lowman, page 149. The fall of theſe Prince Biſhops, therefore, muſt be a great weakening of the Pope's intereſt. In a word, every thing in the preſent ſtate of the world ſeems to declare, that the fall of Antichriſt is near. Beſides, it was the general opinion of ſober people, that the late troubles in Europe would iſſue in ſomething very much for the good of the church, and we ſee it has done ſo in part, and hope it will be productive of ſtill greater good ere long. God does nothing in vain; but ſhould Popery obtain a permanent eſtabliſhment, or continue to flouriſh for any length of time, all the blood and treaſure that was ſpent in the late war would go for nothing; nay, all that God has been doing in Europe for theſe nine or ten years bygone, would, according to our view, be counteracted and undone. But this can never be. God is not like weak man, to fail or miſcarry in any of his undertakings: as he is unchangeable, he cannot alter his purpoſes; and as he is all-mighty, no difficulties or oppoſition can ſtay his hand, or hinder his deſigns from being accompliſhed; and therefore, having begun to pull down the fabric of Antichriſtian ſuperſtition and tyranny, he will, in all probability, never ceaſe till he has razed the foundations thereof. God indeed often ſuſpends his judgements on his enemies, that he may give them time

to repent, and, in caſe of impenitence, to render his juſtice in puniſhing them more evident; and ſo he may do with the great whore: but as both her impenitence and deſtruction are foretold in Scripture, it is probable the time of his forbearance will not laſt long. Beſides, her judgment has been long ſuſpended already, viz. ever ſince the beginning of the Reformation, when her deſtruction was firſt threatened, and when, beſides the expoſure of her wickedneſs, ſhe was actually puniſhed with the loſs of near one half of her dominions; but as ſhe repented not then, nor has done ſince, and as God is now begun to proſecute her a ſecond time, it is probable, her judgment will not be deferred much longer; and, therefore, though Antichriſt ſhould recover his former power, and even be raiſed to a greater height than before, it will in all probability only be for a very ſhort time. This however is poſſible, and God may permit it for many wiſe ends.

Firſt, To fulfil the predictions in his word; for I ſadly fear, that the three days and a half are ſtill to come. 2dly, To convince us more thoroughly of the evil of Popery, of which many of us ſeem to have loſt a ſenſe, he may ſee it meet once more to cauſe us paſs under the yoke, and to feel the ſmart of it. 3dly, To puniſh us for our abuſe of ſpiritual mercies, ſlighting the word, neglecting its ordinances, and not profiting by them, he may ſuffer the light of the Goſpel to be eclipſed among us for a time, and give us up to Popiſh darkneſs. 4thly, God may ſuffer Antichriſt not only to riſe again, but even to an extraordinary height, on purpoſe to render his fall the greater.

greater. To fulfil theſe ends, it is probable God may ſee it meet to ſuffer the churches called Proteſtant once more to feel the iron yoke of Antichriſt, before he completes their deliverance by the final deſtruction of this great adverſary. This time of darkneſs will no doubt be a great trial to the church, and for this reaſon it is, that ſhe is ſo particularly forewarned of it, and that it is expreſsly ſaid to be of ſuch ſhort continuance. Such is the opinion that ſome of our divines have entertained concerning the death of the witneſſes; and theſe, ſo far as I am able to remember them, are the reaſons by which they endeavour to ſupport it; and it is poſſible they may be in the right, though I rather incline to think, that the death of the witneſſes, if it is ſtill future, will not be univerſal, but confined to ſome one particular nation or kingdom: as the word ſtreet is uſed in the ſingular number, perhaps it means no more, but that France, which is one of the ſtreets of the great city, and the principal one thereof, ſhall again be brought under the yoke of Popery, and continue for ſuch a time.

But whatever is of this, from what has been ſaid, it is exceeding probable, not to uſe any ſtronger expreſſion, that the death and reſurrection of the witneſſes, if they be not already paſt, they cannot be very diſtant. But beſides the above, there are other reaſons for thinking that the fall of Antichriſt is near. The Turkiſh empire ſeems to be tottering, and for ſometime bygone has owed its exiſtence entirely to the help of others; but as it is ſaid, Daniel xi. 45. "He ſhall come to his end, and none ſhall help "him,"

" him ;" which ſeems to imply, that for ſome time before his final overthrow, he ſhould owe his preſervation to the help of others ; whence I infer that his doom is near. I have already ſhewn, that the fall of the Turkiſh empire is the thing meant by the ſixth vial; and if this is near, the fall of the Pope, which happens during the fifth vial, muſt be ſtill nearer.

The greater part of thoſe who have hitherto treated of this ſubject, have laboured chiefly to find out the æra of the Beaſt, or the riſe and fall of the weſtern Antichriſt. They would probably have ſucceeded better, had they employed their time on the eaſtern, or on the riſe and fall of Mahometaniſm. The Papacy roſe ſo gradually, or by ſo many different ſteps, that it is difficult to ſay which of theſe was the principal, and to be accounted the time of its riſe.

Mahometaniſm, on the other hand, ſprang up haſtily like a muſhroom, and by one or two, or at the moſt three ſteps, was brought to maturity. It muſt, therefore, be eaſier to determine which was the principal ſtep; and as they are all within a few, that is, thirty years of each other, we cannot be much miſtaken in computing the years of its duration from any of them. Beſides this, the propheſies which relate to the eaſtern Antichriſt, are upon the whole rather clearer than thoſe which relate to the Papacy ; at leaſt, men have been more lucky in diſcovering the meaning of the former than of the latter. Nothing, for example, can be plainer or more ſatisfactory than the explanation which Mr Mede and Biſhop Newton have given us of the fifth and ſixth trumpet, concerning the Saracens and Turks ; but it is otherwiſe with the propheſies

phesies concerning the Papacy. Some of these are still very dark: the reason of this difference perhaps is, because the prophesies concerning the Papacy were to be for a long time in the hands of Papists, who would not in all probability, have taken such care of them, had they known their meaning, and might even have been tempted to corrupt them; whereas the Mahometans being without the pale of the church, the plainness of the prophesies concerning them could give no offence, and consequently be no inducement to the Papists to corrupt them. Besides, it was necessary that the prophesies concerning the Pope should be dark, lest they should have hindered their own accomplishment; whereas the Mahometans being ignorant of the prophesies concerning themselves, having no faith in the word of God, and very little knowledge of it, the plainness of the prophesies concerning them could have no effect, either to help or hinder their accomplishment; consequently it may be expected, that these prophesies should be somewhat clearer than those concerning the western Antichrist. We shall therefore try, if we can find out the time destined for the fall of Mahometanism, or which is the same thing, the fall of the Turk, who is the main pillar and supporter of that religion. The discovery of this, will perhaps lead us to that of the time when the Papacy is to fall; for, in the opinion of most learned men, these two events will go hand in hand, or follow hard upon each other.

It appears pretty clear from that of Daniel xii. 7. that Mahometanism will prevail in the east as long a time as Popery does in the west; that is, for 1260 years;

years. Now, ſince we know when Mahometaniſm began, one would think it ſhould be eaſy to tell when it will fall. But in the riſe of this religion, as in that of Popery, there were different ſteps, though not ſo many, nor ſo diſtant from one another; yet it is not eaſy to determine which is the principal, or from which of them it is, that the years of its duration are to be computed; probably from all of them, that is, if to each ſtep of its riſe we add the 1260 years of its continuance, they will terminate in ſome remarkable ſtep of its fall. This, as we have ſeen, was the caſe with the weſtern Antichriſt, and it is probable it will be ſo with the other. Now the riſe of Mahometaniſm was diſtinguiſhed by three ſteps: the firſt was in the year 606, when Mahomet retired to his cave to forge his impoſture; or in the year 608, when he began publicly to teach it, and to make proſelytes. Theſe two we ſhall conſider as one, the difference in reſpect of time being ſo ſmall. His ſcheme, however, was attended with no great ſucceſs till after his flight from Mecca. This was in the year 622, the famous Hegira or epoch of the Mahometans. This, therefore, may well be reckoned the ſecond ſtep in the riſe of Mahometaniſm; for now Mahomet began to do what he had not done before, to propagate his religion by fire and ſword, and in a little time conquered a great part of Arabia. His ſucceſſor Abubeker broke into Paleſtine and Syria. Omar, the next, Caliph was one of the moſt rapid conquerors who ever ſpread deſolation on the face of the earth: his reign was of no longer duration than ten years and a half; and in that time he ſubdued all Arabia, Syria,

Syria, Meſopotamia, Perſia, and Egypt. In the year 637, he took the city of Jeruſalem, and built a moſque on the very ſpot where the Temple of the Lord had ſtood. This was the moſt notable event in the reign of that great conqueror, and a remarkable fulfilment of the prophecy of Daniel, as was obſerved at that time by the Patriarch of the place, who ſaid, upon Omar's taking poſſeſſion of the city, "This is of a truth the abomination of deſolation "ſpoken of by Daniel the prophet, ſtanding in the "holy place." Beſides, the Saracen empire was then fully eſtabliſhed, and had taken ſuch root as enabled it to ſtand for ages afterwards. This, therefore, may be reckoned the third and laſt ſtep in the riſe of Mahometaniſm. Here then we have three remarkable periods in the riſe of that religion, viz. the year 606, or 608; the year 622, and 637. If to the firſt of theſe numbers we add the 1260 years of the reign of this Antichriſt, they will end in the year 1866; and if we add to it the ſecond number in the xiith of Daniel, viz. the 1290 days, at the end of which the ſanctuary is to be cleanſed, they will end in the year 1897; and it is remarkable, that this year 1897 anſwers alſo to the year 637, when Jeruſalem was taken by the Saracens; for if to the year 637 we add 1260, they will alſo terminate in the year 1897.

Thus, the cleanſing of the ſanctuary will correſpond with the pollution thereof; that is, there will be juſt 1260 years betwixt them. And what is more remarkable ſtill, is, that if we ſuppoſe the reading of the Seventy, Daniel viii. 14. unto 2400 days, to be the true one, and compute theſe years from the year before

before Chriſt 503, when the Perſians, under the command of Ariſtagoras, firſt made war upon the Grecians, by attempting to reduce the iſland of Naxus, they will alſo terminate in the year 1897. This attack of the Perſians was an event memorable enough, as it was the beginning of a war, the moſt famous in hiſtory, and which continued with little interruption, till it ended in the final overthrow of the Perſian empire; that too was the firſt time when the ram puſhed directly weſtward, which was the firſt thing ſeen by Daniel in the viſion. And if we compute the 2400 days of the Seventy from this period, they will alſo terminate in the year 1897. That three prophetic numbers ſhould in this manner all terminate in that year is ſomewhat remarkable, and as that year anſwers to the year 637, when Jeruſalem was taken by the Saracens, and which, as we obſerved before, was the higheſt or laſt ſtep in the riſe of Mahometaniſm; ſo it will in all probability, form the laſt ſtep in the fall thereof, that is, the final overthrow of the Turk, and all the Mahometan and Antichriſtian powers leagued with him in the battle of Gog or Armageddon.

The reſtoration of the Jews happens ſome time before this, for they are repreſented as dwelling in unwalled villages when Gog comes upon them. Their reſtoration coincides with the ſixth vial, and their converſion, which, as we have ſhewn before, happens at the fifth vial, muſt be earlier ſtill. Thus all things concur to prove, that this glorious event is faſt approaching.

FINIS.